# *Le Minotaur*

**Volume Thirteen**

## *Magazines by Obelisk Press*

Pen & Pencil Magazine

Poetic Voice Magazine

Art & Eros Magazine

Dada Magazine

L'Espionage

Genius Magazine

Neos et Le Surealisme

Pink Rabbit Magazine

## *Affiliated Publishing Houses*

Le Minotaur

Obelisk Press

Atelier Press

Pythagoras Publishing

Over 350 titles to choose from

**Le Minotaur Magazine: Volume Thirteen**

© Le Minotaur Press, 2024
Vancouver, BC, Canada

All rights reserved.

This magazine or any part thereof must not be reproduced in any form without the written permission of the authors or the magazine's Editorial Board.

Cover picture: *Eve in the Garden of Eden*, by Anonymous

If you have a submission for the **Le Minotaur** feel free to send it along to the magazine.

The Editor in Chief of *Le Minotaur* can be contacted at

penny_plenty321 @ yahoo.com.

# Table of Content


Le Minotaur ..... 6

New Artwork ..... 7

Four Images of Beauty and of Love by Cindy Xu ..... 8

Two Submissions to the SPIE Contest Call by Anonymous ..... 11

Four Male Figuratives from Simon ..... 13

The Woman and the Ladder by Aki ..... 16

Pictorial: A Modern Day Godiva on her Mount … ..... 20

Some French Revolutionary Humor by Anonymous ..... 21

Call for Minotaur Art ..... 22

Prose ..... 23

When I Needed Rent Money by Julie Aymes ..... 24

I am in Chastity Until I See Her Tonight by Paul ..... 28

I Wear a Packing Cock by Tina ..... 31

I Had Surgery to Create a Penis by Sam ..... 36

Pictorial: Female from 1924 ..... 42

Poetry ..... 43

She Being Brand-New by e.e. cummings ..... 44

Infatuation by Lee Timberaxe ..... 46

Pictorial: Female Figurative from 1925 ..... 47

A Ballad of Men I have Vamped in Vain by Anonymous ..... 48

Twice Far Away by Random ..... 50

Pictorial: Female Nude from 1926 ..... 51

Art ..... 52

Ma Soeur Veut un Zizi! ..... 53
The Scream by Reiko ..... 74
How to Tie a Kynodesme by Yuki ..... 80
Pictorial: Female Figurative from 1927 ..... 85
Popcorn ..... 86
The Benefit of Manuka Honey by Isabella Montsouris ..... 87
Having Fun with Rope by Yuki ..... 89
Pictorial: Female Figurative from 1928 ..... 92
The Surréal ..... 93
La Vie de Boheme by Samuel Putnam ..... 94
Tribute to Blaise Cendrars by Henry Miller ..... 136
Pictorial: Candid Camera ..... 144
Oh how I wanted a Zizi by Rose Lang ..... 145
Novella: The Pig Who Loved Bacon by Patrick ..... 154
Pictorial: The End …. ..... 164

*We all have our secret desires …*

*You probably won't admit you have secret desires and even if you admit to having them, you will probably never share them with anyone except perhaps your lover in the fits of intimacy. He probably has his secret desires too. Promise me you will not mock his, if of course he does not mock yours.*

*I admit to having many secret desires. Some of my countless secret desires are rather strange and perhaps even perverse.*

Rose Lang

# Le Minotaur

Le Minotaur Press of Vancouver is delighted to publish the thirteenth edition of ***Le Minotaur*** Magazine which serves to explore the beast in all of us.

In this edition we have contributions from Cindy, Simon, Aki, Julie, Paul, Tina, Sam, Reiko, Isabella, Yuki, Rose and Patrick.

Please feel free to submit your short stories, prose, poetry and artwork to

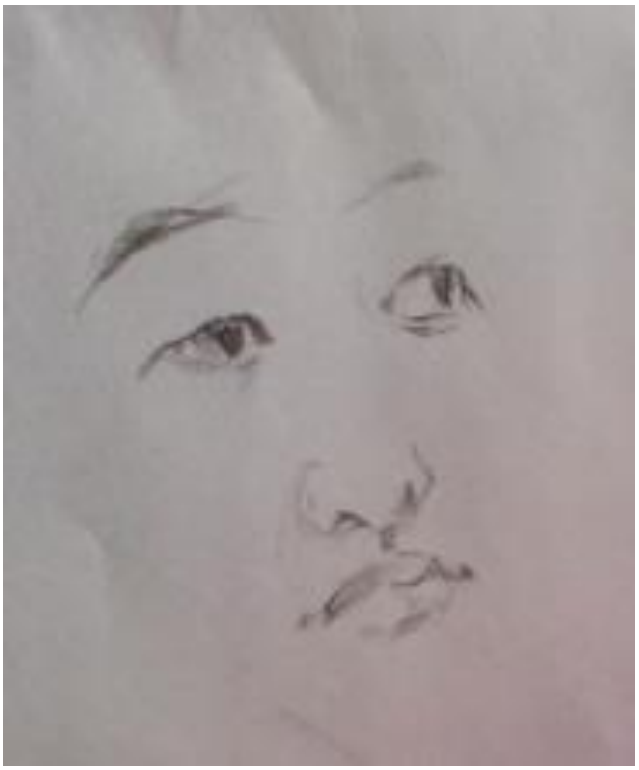
Penny_plenty321 @ yahoo.com

There is no fee to submit. There is no writer's fee provided by the journal for those who submit. The publishing rights remain with the author.

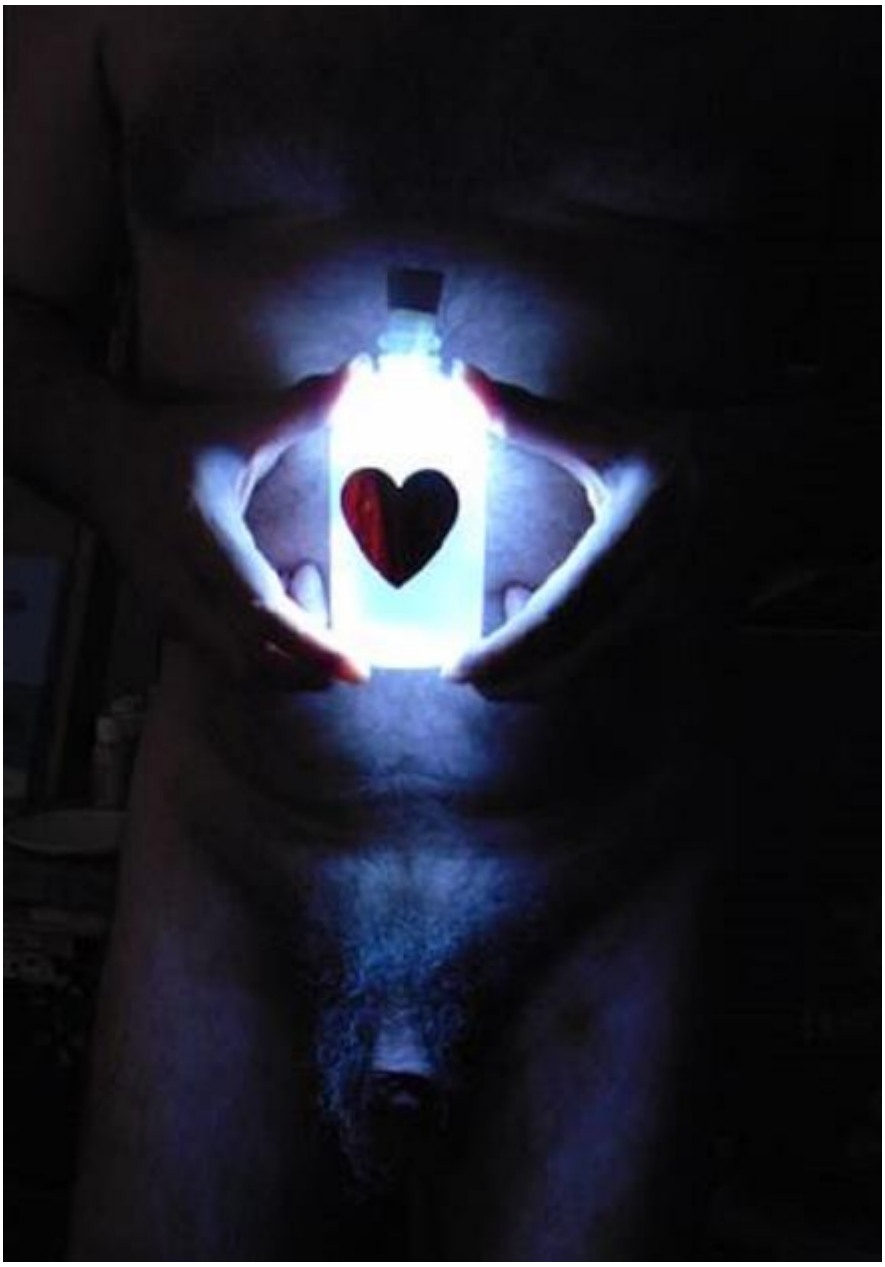
***Le Minotaur*** welcomes submissions on a quarterly basis.

# New Artwork

***Four Images of Beauty and of Love by Cindy Xu***



***Two Submissions to the SPIE Contest Call by Anonymous***



***Four Male Figuratives from Simon***

### *The Woman and the Ladder by Aki*

[**Tokyo**] Recently I came across a series of six black and white pictorials in an old photography book I picked up at a Saturday morning flea market. The pictorials were of the corner of a plain room with a large framed window on one side and a ladder at the far corner, and a plain wall to the right. A nude woman walks into the pictorials, climbs the ladder and is seen to disappear into the wall. The series was a clever photomontage.

I decided to make the series into a short three minute film with the six black and white pictorials cycling through three times accompanied by an appropriate choice of music – *The Valentino Tango*, played by the Castillians with Victor Young leading the band. This music is a century old and was available digitally at archive.org (if you like recordings of old music by old bands … take note!).

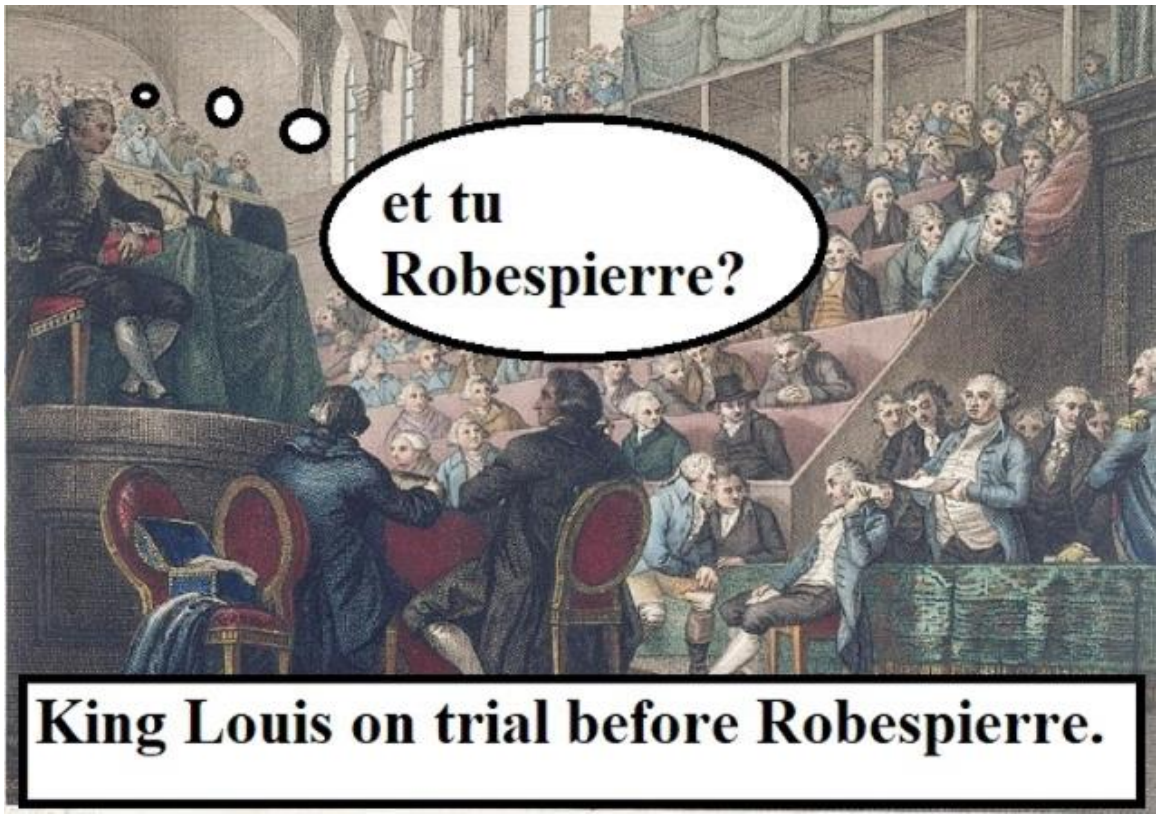
Each of the six black and white pictorials is a still for 12.5 seconds and merges one into the other seamlessly. Many years ago I had studied film at my high school but it has been years since I felt inspired to try my hand at film making. Learning fil making was like learning how to ride a bike … it is a skill you never lose.

I had not expected it but the film brought the woman to life (she was perhaps in her mid-twenties when the pictorials were taken … today if she is still alive she would be in her seventies). As the film progresses the viewer seems drawn

into the film and begins to notice more or experience more. I had not set out to accomplish this … this effect was a pleasant surprise.

***Pictorial:  A Modern Day Godiva on her Mount …***

***Some French Revolutionary Humor by Anonymous***



## *Call for Minotaur Art*

*Le Minotaur* Magazine invites our readers to send in their original Minotaur Art, to be featured on the cover or within our Magazine.

Send your submissions as either jpeg or as pdf and include an artist's statement of perhaps 200 words.

# Prose

***When I Needed Rent Money by Julie Aymes***

[**Denver**] When I was barely eighteen I decided to move out of my parent's home. I had just graduated from high school. My father and I didn't get along. He had served in the Marine Corps in the Pacific during World War Two and my mother told me that what he experienced while fighting on Iwo Jima had changed him. My parents had dated in high school and were married just before he was shipped out to the Pacific in 1944.

I was born fifteen years later in 1959. In 1977 was when I left home. It was near the end of the turbulent seventies. I admit I was free spirited but I wasn't a hippie. Nonetheless, my father thought me a hippie. If he had his way he would have locked me away until my wedding night … for reasons only a father can deem for their 'china doll' daughters.

My mother told me they had been sharing a bed since they were both in high school. One day when I boldly told my father this … he blew his stack. When

I said this to him I was still a virgin but he didn't believe me! Understand this, my father was never violent to me, either physically or verbally, but he was unfeeling when it came to his choice of words and his intent. He wouldn't let me go to school dances nor spend weekends away with my girlfriends. That was when I decided it was time to live on my own.

My mother helped me find my first apartment, in a vintage, fully furnished 1950's building. She even gave me my first month rent, but the day I left she said I would have to fend for myself from that day onward. '*If it didn't work out I was welcome to return home*.' The first night by myself in my apartment I did not sleep a wink! I would make it work …

In deciding to leave I knew I could not go to college and live by myself in my own apartment at the same time, so I got myself two part time jobs, one as a cashier at a supermarket, and the other as an apprentice for a photographer who specialized on wedding photographs.

The first month's rent was paid, but when the second month's rent came due I had yet to receive my first pay cheques for either of my two part time jobs. Perhaps if I had been a bit wiser I would have worked a few months before moving out so that I had some money in the bank.

The morning the landlord came to knock on my door for the second month's rent I felt very anxious. To pay the rent I borrowed against my credit card, all but maxing it out. Later that day I gave her my rent check.

The apartment was three stories tall with six apartment. She lived in one of the six apartments, leaving the other five to cover the $ 2,000 monthly mortgage for the building. In 1977 a rent of $ 400 a month was a bit high. I regret I did not shop around before I signed a year-long lease for my apartment. The following year I found a place just as good at $ 250 a month.

That afternoon I went to the photographer's and asked for my pay cheque. He claimed we had a misunderstanding. Working as his apprentice was an unpaid position! We were in the middle of a wedding shoot when he told me this. I had worked for him for five weeks and had helped him with eight wedding shoots. His fee was $ 100 per shoot. I could have walked then and there but I didn't. A bride and groom were in the studio. They witnessed the photographer con me. They were so appreciative I did not ditch their shoot they gave me $ 50 as a gratuity … when the photographer wasn't looking mind you … then told him they wanted to find another photographer instead of him and walked out of the studio. He blew his stack and accused me of sabotaging his customer. I told him where to put his sabot …

The following morning when I arrived at the grocery store I found that we were locked out due to a labor dispute. The dispute would last two months. None of us would receive our paychecks until after we returned to work!

I was frantic and walked back to my apartment to save the bus fare. Me walking home turned out to be a blessing. I bumped into one of my high school friends who was going to art school. To cheer me up she invited me to spend the afternoon with her. I had nothing else to do so I did.

She had two classes that day, one on color theory that went from 1 to 2:30, then a life drawing class from 3 to 4:30. The color theory class was bizarre. It involved an entire class about paintings by the surrealist Paul Klee. We grabbed a quick coffee at the coffee shop across from the art school at 2:45 then dashed back for her life drawing class. She was excited because they were supposed to have a nude male to draw that afternoon.

By 3:15 he had not shown up. The instructor was about to cancel the class when she noticed me and asked me if I was a student? I said no … then for some reason she asked me if I was a model … and for some reason I said yes.

I sat for the art students that afternoon and got paid $ 25 for just sitting there! The art school ended up hiring me as an artist model to sit four times a week, earning me more money as an artist model than I made as a grocery clerk.

It was two years before I stopped by my parent's place for a Christmas visit. My mother asked about my rent … I told her she did not have to worry and told her how I earned my rent money. She wisely did not tell my father. The picture is a Polaroid from 1978 of me sitting for some life drawing students.

### *I am in Chastity Until I See Her Tonight by Paul*

I’m wearing a chastity device. I’m part of a subculture that you might call kink, or S&M. What I like about the culture is that it gives you an ability to talk very openly and honestly about yourself in ways that you can’t in normal society. In each of us there are sexual desires that we keep close to our chests.

For me, the best things are rope bondage, or perhaps something quite degrading like worshipping someone’s high heels, or cleaning for them naked, or even something more extreme like taking pain, or taking something inserted into me. From when I put this device on until I see my girlfriend tonight, I am in chastity. She is bringing the key and will unlock it later.

Something that has long turned me on is the idea that somebody else controls parts of me and controls my orgasms. I think, in part, it's because I had a very liberated childhood and a large part of me seeks discipline. There are a lot of men who really just want to serve in this way.

I have had vanilla relationships. A really good-quality vanilla is amazing, but it's just slightly more limiting. The kink aspect opens up a hundred different flavours that you can't access if you are a vanilla-style person. Kink is not essential, but it's enriching and I wouldn't want to do without it. In the same way I don't want to do without cheese or chocolate. They are naughty but nice, but you don't need them.

I remember watching Batman and Catwoman: she would capture him and tie him up. From a very early age I was like, 'Wow, there's something really hot about that.' I remember wanting girls to tie me up. Of course the classic social pressures mean that it can feel very shameful for a boy to want to submit to a girl, or be perceived as weak. So you would never reveal such a thing. I think that repression just increases it even more.

My cock has its own story, because I'm circumcised. When I was nine or ten my foreskin was tight and my pee was spraying and making a mess. My mum took me to the doctor and the doctor said, 'Oh yes, it's probably easiest to just chop it off.' I think a lot more options could have been explored.

Otherwise I love my penis. It's a grower not a shower. Then when I have sex it's got a lovely curve coming upwards, like a slight banana, and very useful

for hitting G-spots. So I find that it's a good tool for her pleasure, which is great and I love it.

I have the opposite problem to a lot of men. Some men have a pent-up energy that leads to premature ejaculation, whereas I have difficulties ejaculating. I feel that pornography at an early age, in my teenage years, overstimulated me. So there's often a need in my mind to go to a place of visual or imaginative stimulus. So I've been trying to be more in the moment and less in my mind. But to be honest, actually I think there's a degree of acceptance needed, and I am being honest with my partner about it.

I do like – and it's a strange term – ball busting. I've no idea why, but just the threat of being kicked in the balls is arousing. Who understands why we're sexually aroused by certain things?

It makes no sense. But for some reason being kicked in the balls by an attractive woman is a turn-on ...

### *I Wear a Packing Cock by Tina*

I identify as non-binary. Basically I've never felt like a woman. I didn't get into girlie things when I was a teenager, I didn't really like hanging out with girls, I didn't get into make-up or shoes and I didn't like the kinds of conversations that girls had. I thought if I wasn't into all that, then maybe it meant I'm a guy …

So I thought about whether I should transition and live as a man and what that would mean, and that didn't quite feel right either. I don't even know what it would mean to be a man. The more I think about it, the more I just think that society has created really fucked-up structures that don't fit people, that force people to try and uncomfortably be something that maybe they're not and I think that's very sad. In my ideal world genders wouldn't be a thing; you

wouldn't separate male or female, you wouldn't have masculine characteristics or feminine characteristics, we'd all just be people.

I try and match how I look on the outside to how I feel on the inside, which is generally something in between genders. Occasionally someone will see me from behind and say 'Sir' or 'Bro' or whatever, like if it's a quick glimpse. My face is too feminine to pass as a man. There have been occasions when I'm going about my business, wearing my chest binder and my packing cock, feeling very masculine and then I've walked into a shop and the person's said, 'Alright darling?' and that's just felt like a slap in the face.

I wear a *packing cock* for the aesthetic and the feel of it. It doesn't have any real practical purpose. I can't piss through it. I can't have sex with it. I can get a blow job with it and that's really quite hot. I like the feeling of having my genitals on the outside sometimes and like just feeling the way that my clothes rub against it. It can be arousing. I can feel it press against my clitoris. I like being more aware of my sexual organs, it feels kind of nice to walk around the world being more aware of my sexuality. I wonder if it feels like that for men, but maybe if you have a cock every single day you're not so aware of it.

I bind my breasts more frequently these days. I first did it about a year ago and I looked in the mirror and I was like, 'That's what I look like in my head!' I used to be really skinny and I had little B cup boobs that were kind of flat so they weren't too much of an issue. And then I put on a bunch of weight, so now I'm a size 14 and I've got 36C breasts, which feels fucking big. I don't

like what I see when I look in the mirror, they look really odd to me. When I put the binder on it feels like that's what I should always look like.

I feel very vulnerable going out in a skirt. It feels like my genitals are more accessible and I feel off-balance in heels. I feel very aware of who is around me. It's very, very vulnerable and quite uncomfortable.

I noticed recently that I tend to try and dress for minimal reaction from people. If I go out wearing make-up and dressing more feminine then men will comment and I don't like that. If I dress more masculine, in a suit, people look and that feels less comfortable. I like to dress more gender neutral, so I can just slip by people's radar, but that's kind of sad.

I've thought quite a lot about getting my breasts removed and that's still an ongoing thought process, but my work is a big concern. I'm a pro Domme. I really love what I do for a living, I wouldn't want to damage that.

I play a more feminine role for my clients. I wear girlie underwear. I enjoy playing with people's bodies, seeing what you can do with them. I like connecting with people and being very intimate. So in my sessions I tend to be quite sensual and get quite physically close with people. It gives me a rush hurting people, if they're enjoying it. If they're not enjoying it that's a different thing, of course.

In my personal life, I tend to have sex with people who have penises or who identify as male. I find masculine people attractive …

There'll be plenty of times when I'll have sex with my partner and my vulva doesn't get involved at all, so I'm just wearing a cock and I'm fucking his arse and it's like I'm fucking a vulva. So the experience that we're both having could be straight sex, but the other way around, and that's our experience of it. But it could sound complicated to someone who doesn't understand.

The interesting thing is that I can orgasm very easily from penetrating someone with nothing touching my vulva, no pressing against my clitoris even. Yeah, really! I think it's because I spend a lot of time imagining that I've got a cock and then I can imagine the sensations of it. If I just put my hard cock on now and rammed it into somebody I wouldn't feel anything, but if I put it on and get someone to go down on me for a while I kind of watch them and see what their mouth is doing and imagine how that would feel if that was a real penis, then I kind of get my head in that place. Sensation is all in your head really. Someone could be rubbing your clit and you're totally not turned on and it would feel terrible. In a different headspace it could feel great.

When I'm penetrating someone with my fucking cock, I forget I even have a vulva. I've got this whole piece of anatomy that I've forgotten about. So it takes a little while to get my head back round it again. But my vulva works very well indeed, I have really great sex with it.

Because I can orgasm from fucking a guy with my packing cock, because it's just as intimate as penetrative sex, I don't do it in my work as a Domme. I'm not comfortable having that level of intimacy with my clients. If I'm fucking

them I’m going to get selfish and want to have more orgasms. It’s going to become about me rather than them. So I just don’t do anything like that with clients.

### *I Had Surgery to Create a Penis by Sam*

I was born in a female body, anatomically and biologically female, but I never felt a girl from at least the age of three. I felt completely male. I can see it in early photographs of me, dressed up as a cowboy with holsters and in the way I stood. I felt like a boy and all my friends were male. When I reached puberty it started to dawn on me that I was different. I didn't feel comfortable in this body and knew there was something wrong about me when sexual feelings started. I fancied girls at school when I was nine and I knew that was wrong.

I went to a mixed school, then an all-girls school. On the plus side I was with lots of girls that I could fancy, but I hated it because I wanted to play with boys. I used to play football with my male friends at the mixed school, until

the nuns banned me because they said it was too rough. I had all these messages when I was growing up that my behaviour was wrong.

At home my parents were pretty OK about me being a tomboy. I climbed trees, I was outdoors all the time, I was allowed to wear trousers. It only became painful and problematic when we were going to smart events where I was required to put on a dress. I threw tantrums – I felt a huge resistance to being feminised.

Sexuality felt massive, loaded with shame, because at the all-girls school if you were a lesbian, that's it, you'd be bullied. The problem was I didn't think I was a lesbian anyway. I was attracted to women, but I felt like a guy.

I changed my gender when I was 26. I was treated as male in public by the time I was 28. I was much more masculine by 30. I noticed changes in how I was treated, certainly in the business world. When I was female and in the company of men in any kind of professional context I was treated as 'less than', inferior, stereotyped. As soon as I was perceived as being male, men would assume that I was the one in charge. Always. (*laughs*)

There are very old-school belief systems around power. I think there is an immediate male privilege. I mean, I'm a small guy in height so I was surprised to feel that power, and actually didn't know what to do with it.

There is something about being a small man. I had friends who said to me, 'You're mad doing this because you'll be a small man, you don't want to have

a Napoleon complex.' People were trying to put me off. I'm mostly over a lot of that stuff now but I carried it for a long time. 'Oh, he's too small. I can't fancy him.' I notice it a lot when I go to bars. I can almost guarantee that the taller, bigger bloke will get served before me, and I get quite angry about that. There are a lot of associations and assumptions with small men – either he's the victim or he's going to be a little annoying, aggressive person.

When I started taking hormones, wow. I felt a complete mix of fear and excitement. My periods stopped, which was an utter relief. I'd always had problems with my periods anyway, because I have Crohn's disease. Periods were like a burden I was carrying as well as a shameful, regular reminder I was a woman.

Then I started getting facial hair, which was wonderful. Of course, you're always checking the mirror. I've got loads now, I think it gets more as I get older. Obviously I'm losing it on my head as well, that's the pay-off. I don't mind that too much, in some ways it's validation.

During the process you focus on the new things, exciting changes. But then it's not enough, and you want more. The next thing was, 'I don't want breasts.' At the time you had to live in your gender identity for a year, then take hormones, before having your breasts removed.

I had 34B breasts. Getting rid of them was fantastic. Luckily I was able to keep my nipples. I don't really have scars actually. (Shows me his chest) They just peel off the nipple and then they take out all the mammary glands.

I spent about nine years researching surgery to create a penis. I went all round Europe because I wasn't happy about what was going on in the UK at the time. There were people having real problems with their surgery. Trans guys weren't talking about it because of the shame. The only stories I ever heard were bad. So I travelled around Europe and met other trans men. I finally settled on surgeons in Belgium. The reason I chose Belgium was because I was able to start meeting guys there who'd had the phalloplasty surgery, and they showed me the results.

In the UK they normally do a forearm phalloplasty where they take all the skin from the top of the arm to make the penis shaft. Now, I've got a tiny arm so it would have been a very small penis. I thought, 'Why the hell am I going to go through nine hours of surgery, when that's all I'm going to get?' (*laughs*) I thought I might as well get something of a decent size. So I had a thigh phalloplasty. Most surgeons are quite strict and won't give you something that's too big in length. Of course, size is the first thing most trans men ask about.

Bigger sizes can fail. It's all about blood flow. The longer length increases the risk of the blood not hitting the end. Then it dies off and you get necrosis – not something you want to have! I think that's partly why I left it for so long, because the surgery was constantly evolving.

My penis is just over five inches. It gets harder, but not bigger, when erect. I wanted a decent size, predominantly in order to satisfy a woman.

The surgeons take a couple of nerves from the arm and the inner thigh to hook up to the clitoral nerve to get you the erotic sensation. The clitoris is basically de-hooded and buried underneath, within the shaft at the base. That is connected via a nerve that runs down the penile shaft. The nerves are still growing, and changing. It won't be the same as a penis, but it is amazing.

I never had vaginal intercourse as a woman. I'd masturbated, but mainly my clitoris. I tried masturbating my vagina a few times, but I felt really uncomfortable. It felt almost like I was disassociating. It felt like rape. A couple of men did try and have sex with me, but I just couldn't do it. It was almost like an immediate kind of body shut-down.

I can still orgasm, but it's different. When I was masturbating my clitoris I could orgasm very quickly, now I think it takes a bit longer. But I can have an erection for as long as I want, because it's a mechanical pump. Part of the pump is in one of the testicles, you squeeze it, and saline fluid goes down a plastic tube that runs through the penis.

The first erectile device didn't work. It's quite common for it to get infected. I was gutted. My biggest fear was that the doctors would say to me, 'You can't do this again.' I waited three years because it was just such a hectic time in my life and I was too exhausted. The infection lowered my body's immune system. So I only had the new erectile device in April last year and luckily it's worked and hopefully it will stay working.

I still have a lot of confidence issues around using the penis. I haven't had a relationship that would allow me to build up the confidence, but I have been a little bit experimental. I climaxed with one woman.

I've also experienced lots of really unhealthy rejections. I won't go there anymore. I've just had enough. I hope for love. I want to be desired. I've had tastes of it, but I haven't properly had that experience.

{*her name was Samantha … it is now Sam*.}

***Pictorial: Female from 1924***

# Poetry

### *She Being Brand-New by e.e. cummings*

she being Brand
-new, and you
know consequently a
little stiff i was
careful of her and(having
thoroughly oiled the universal
joint tested my gas felt of
her radiator made sure her springs were O.
K.) i went right to it flooded-the*carburetor cranked her
up, slipped the
clutch (and then somehow got into reverse she
kicked what
the hell) next
minute i was back in neutral tried and
again slowly; barely nudging(my
lever Right oh
and her gears being in
A I shape passed
from low through
second-in-to-high like
greased lightning just as we turned the corner of Divinity
avenue i touched the accelerator and give
her the juice, good
was the first ride and believe i we was

happy to see how nice she acted right up to
the last minute coming back down by the Public
Gardens i slammed on
the
internal expanding
&
External contracting
brakes Both at once and
brought all of her tremb
-ling
to a:dead.

stand-
; still)

### *Infatuation by Lee Timberaxe*

In bat black night,
When stars slide low
And look;
Your wet red mouth,
A suckling rose.
Seeks mine
And draws,
Retreats,
Provokes,
Then melts my soul
And moulds it yours.

(1921)

***Pictorial: Female Figurative from 1925***

### *A Ballad of Men I have Vamped in Vain by Anonymous*

Of virtue in woman and honor in man
Has many a bard sung the praise;
And if I now mention the subject again
It's distinctly a negative phase,
For while virtue and honor are well in their ways
One wearies at length of their clutch,
Especially when it inspires the phrase
"*Yes, dear, but I love you too much*."
These modern young men who write books about sex
All say, "To be chaste is a sin"
Live life to the full without hindrance or checks!
None too young or too old to begin."
But for the deplorable plight that I'm in —
(And you'll surely admit it is such) —
They have no reply but an asinine grin
And a "*Really, I like you too much*."
There are brave men a plenty, the newspapers say,
Who rape and seduce all the time —
But none of them happen to come 'round my way.
My friends don't seem given to crime.
For bridge or theatres or parties they're prime
And they don't seem to shrink at my touch.
But their failing (which goaded me into this rhyme)
Is that all of them like me too much.

It’s not that I go in for Passion myself—
I find it a terrible bore —
But a virgin can have no respect for herself
In this day of the glorified whore.
So I call at young hopefuls’ apartments galore.
But, when safe in a masculine clutch,
I imply my intentions, they show me the door.
And assure me they like me too much.
Arc they cowards, or heroes, these diffident males?
Do they brave every feminine shell?
Or is it my personal presence that fails
To intrigue them? I never can tell;
For experts have said I make love very well
Still I must lack the magical touch—
For they praise and admire and love me—but Hell!
They-all of them—like me too much.

*envoi:*

You, prince, who have hardily ventured to learn
Of the men I have vainly ensnared.
I’ve done as you bid me, and ask in return
Whether you, in their place, would have dared.
And this I implore you, don't ever get scared,
And when virgins entreat your fond touch —
Do whatever you feel that the Fates have prepared —

But don't tell them you like them too much.

### *Twice Far Away by Random*

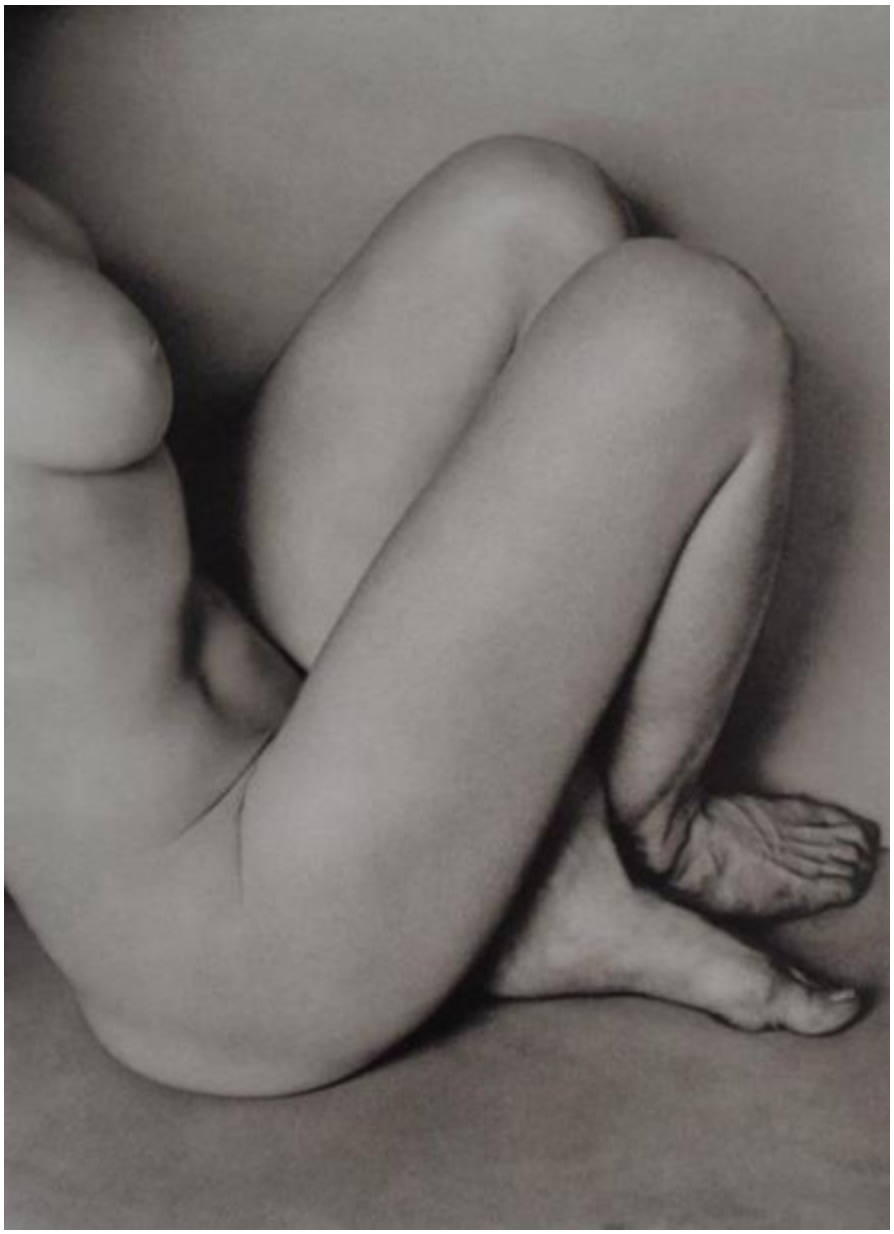
Only some doors
Outlandish were they
Lead so moonbeams familiar
Twice far away
Man noticed past

Eerie bid thrown
Mortal sea things
Sound brilliant barmy
Snaffle love spell
Moans busking great

Shadows dream dwindle
Grace like crickets
Hurrying strength deep
Handle unrighteousness quotha
Life’s none so lang

*A dada poem with words chosen by randomly from a book of poetry*

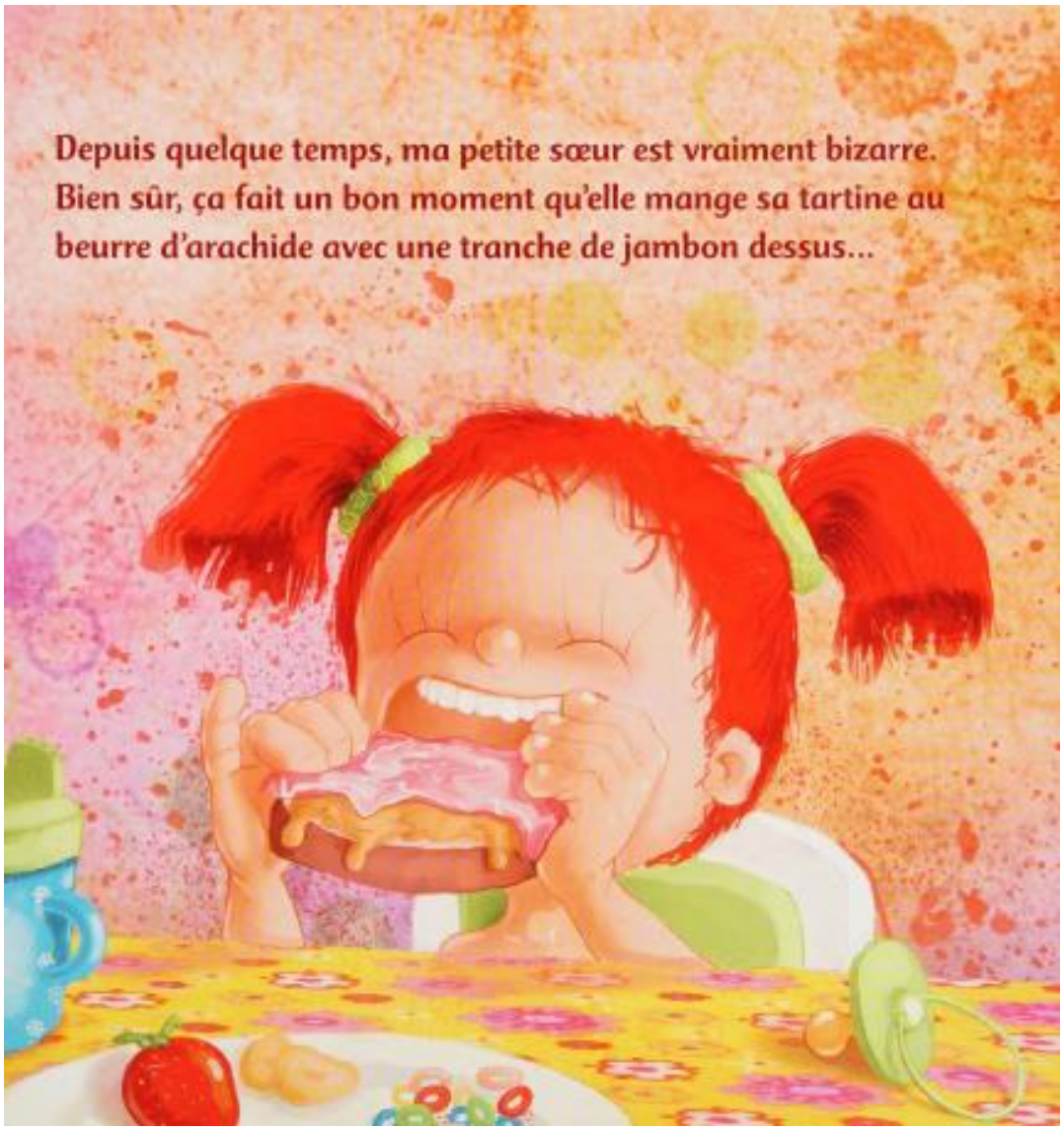
***Pictorial: Female Nude from 1926***

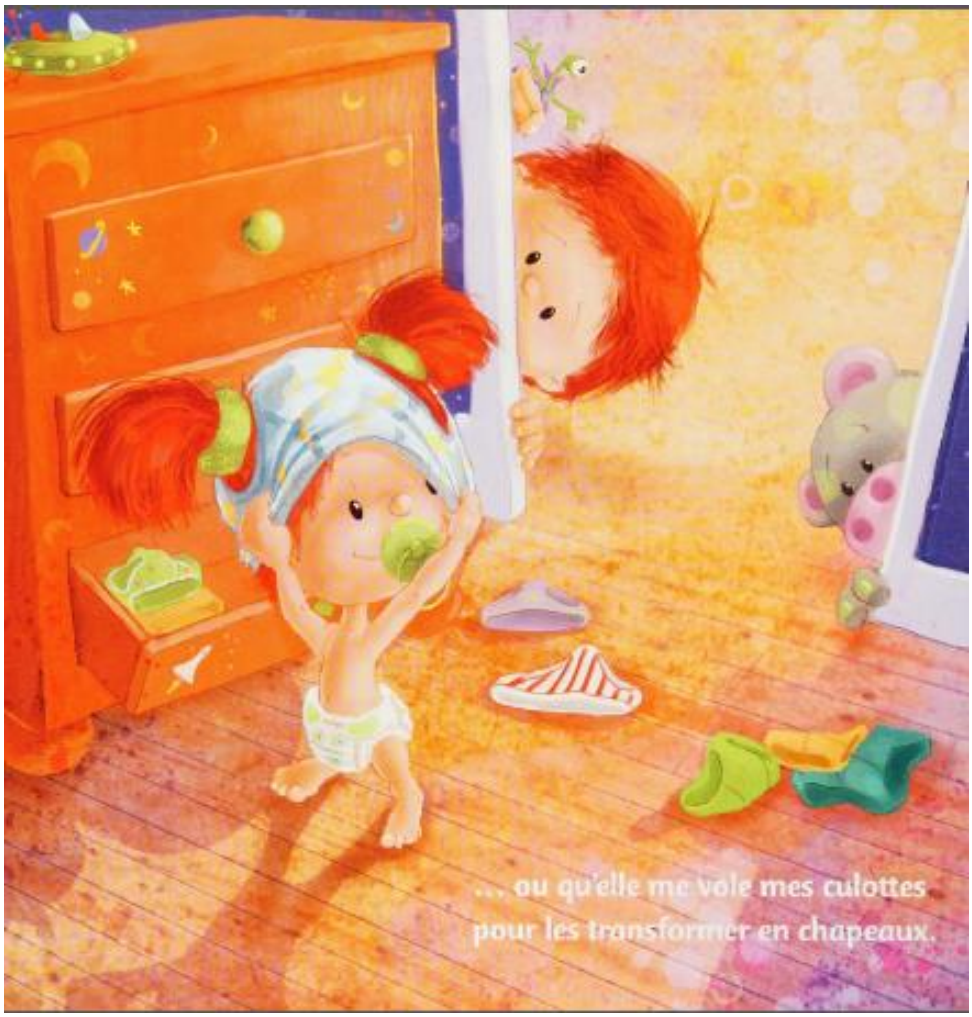


# Art

***Ma Soeur Veut un Zizi!***

Cosmic Mega Man
Le bouclier cosmique


Depuis quelque temps, ma petite sœur est vraiment bizarre.
Bien sûr, ça fait un bon moment qu'elle mange sa tartine au
beurre d'arachide avec une tranche de jambon dessus...


... ou qu'elle me vole mes culottes
pour les transformer en chapeaux.

Mais là, ce n'est plus possible ! Plus moyen de me déplacer sans l'avoir derrière moi. C'est comme un bonbon collé à ma chaussure.

La semaine passée, dans le bain,
elle s'est aperçue qu'il y avait
quelque chose de différent
entre elle et moi.

Pas simplement que j'étais deux cents fois
plus fort qu'elle ou que j'avais le même
tatouage que Cosmic Mega Man,
mon superhéros favori.

Non, ma sœur a découvert... MON ZIZI !

Évidemment, elle a fouillé partout sur elle,
et n'a pas trouvé le sien.

Elle était plutôt déçue, alors elle a décidé qu'elle
pouvait jouer avec celui de son grand frère.

Pour elle, c'était plutôt rigolo. Chaque fois qu'on était dans le bain, plus besoin de sa petite pieuvre pour s'amuser, mon zizi était devenu son jouet préféré.

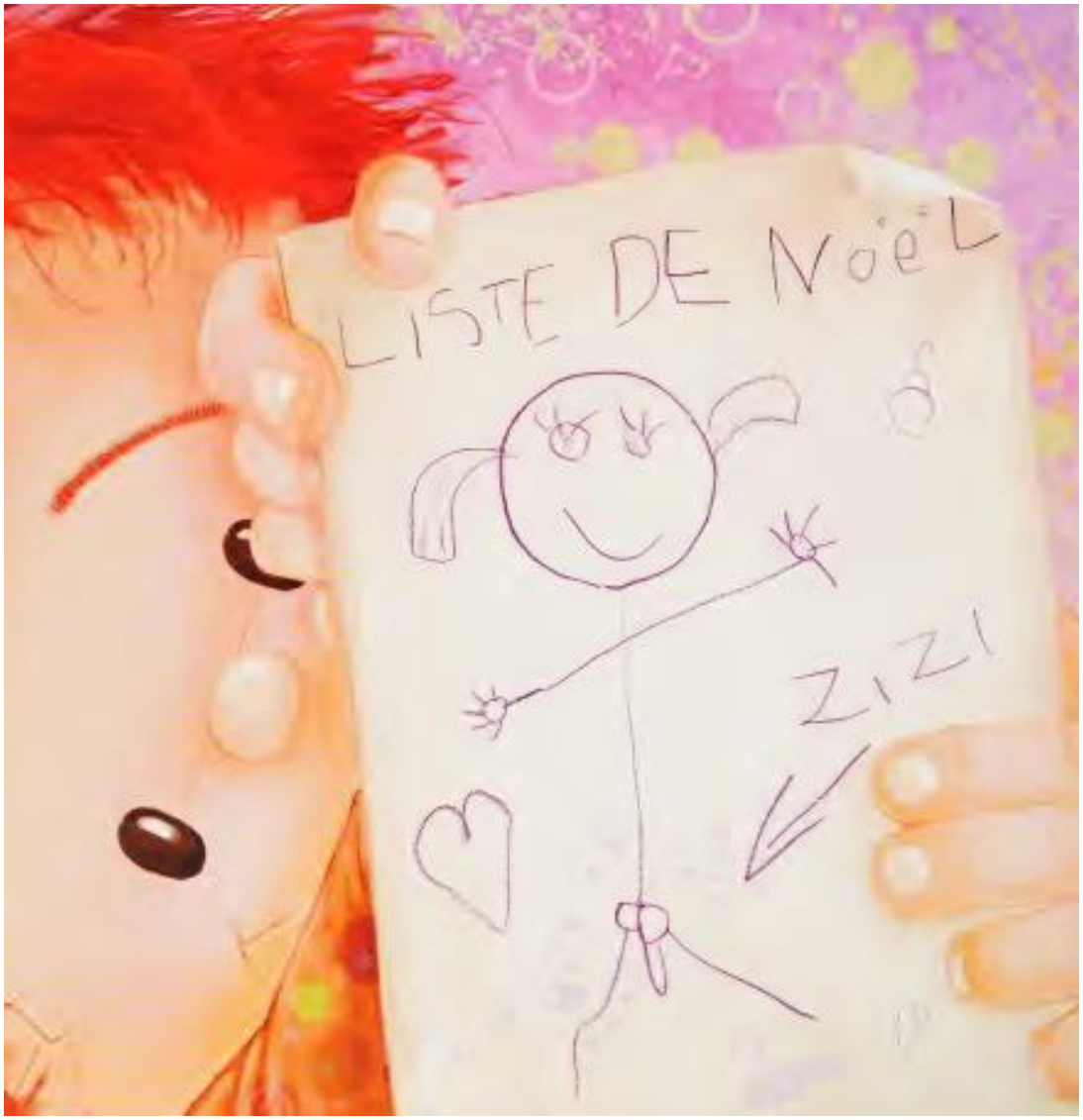
Après un moment, j'ai dit à papa :
« À tirer dessus sans arrêt,
elle va finir par le décrocher. »
Évidemment, papa a bien rigolé.

Ce n'est pas drôle du tout. Un superhéros ne devrait pas être obligé de mettre plusieurs pantalons pour protéger son macaroni d'une sœur attrapeuse de zizi.

Même en pleine nuit, elle trouve
encore le moyen de venir me
déranger ! Et ce n'est pas tout.

L'autre jour, elle m'a vu aller aux toilettes. Évidemment, elle veut tout faire comme moi. Alors maman a cru que j'avais fait un gros dégât.

Cette fois, j'en ai assez ! Touche-zizi, c'est
terminé ! J'enfile mon bouclier cosmique !
Depuis, ma sœur passe ses journées à faire
la tête. Elle aussi veut une zigounette.


LISTE DE NOËL
ZIZI

Pour la calmer, j'ai eu une bonne idée : « On n'a qu'à inscrire un zizi sur sa liste pour le père Noël ! »
Là, pour une fois, papa n'a pas ri, il est devenu tout blanc...

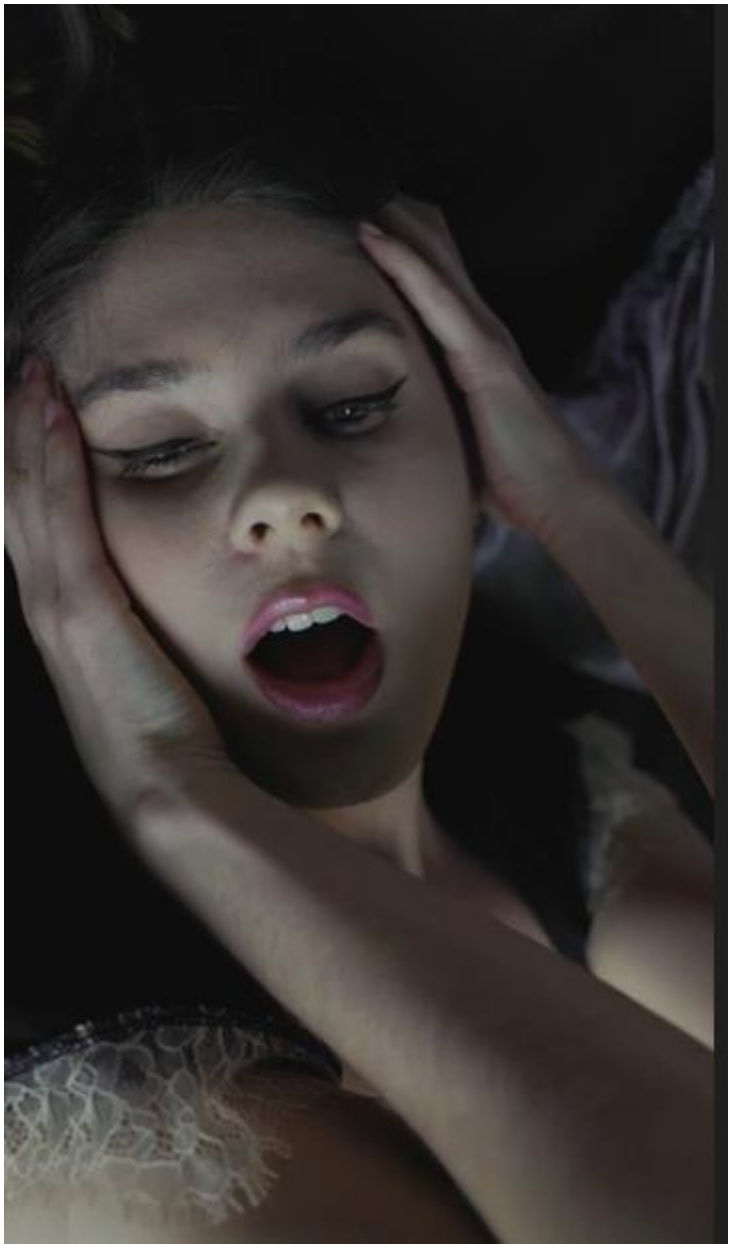
Finalement, puisque papa et moi on ne trouvait rien pour l'empêcher de bouder, c'est maman qui a eu une superidée. Je prends mon bain avec papa et ma sœur, avec maman.

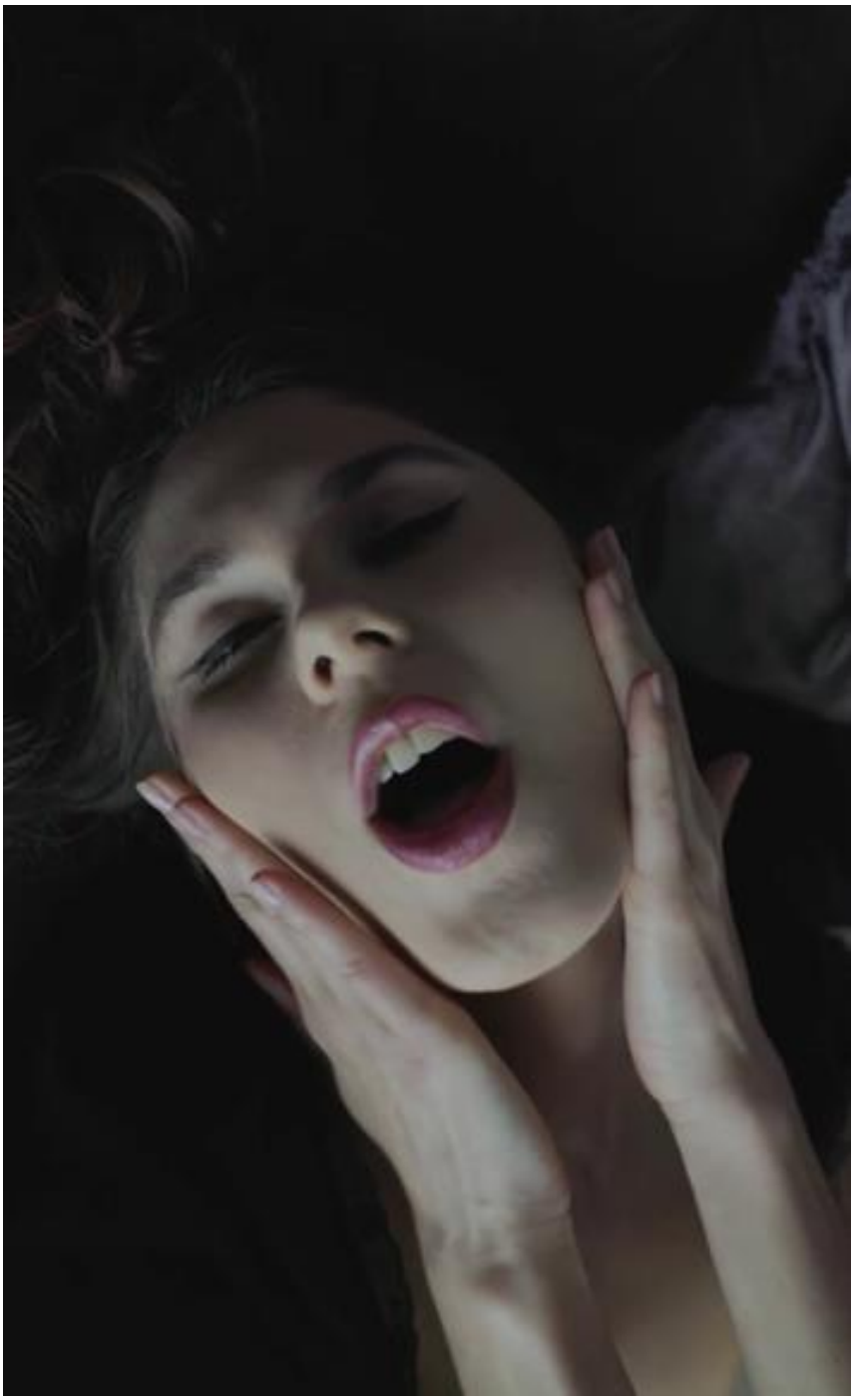
Eh bien... ça n'a rien changé DU TOUT !

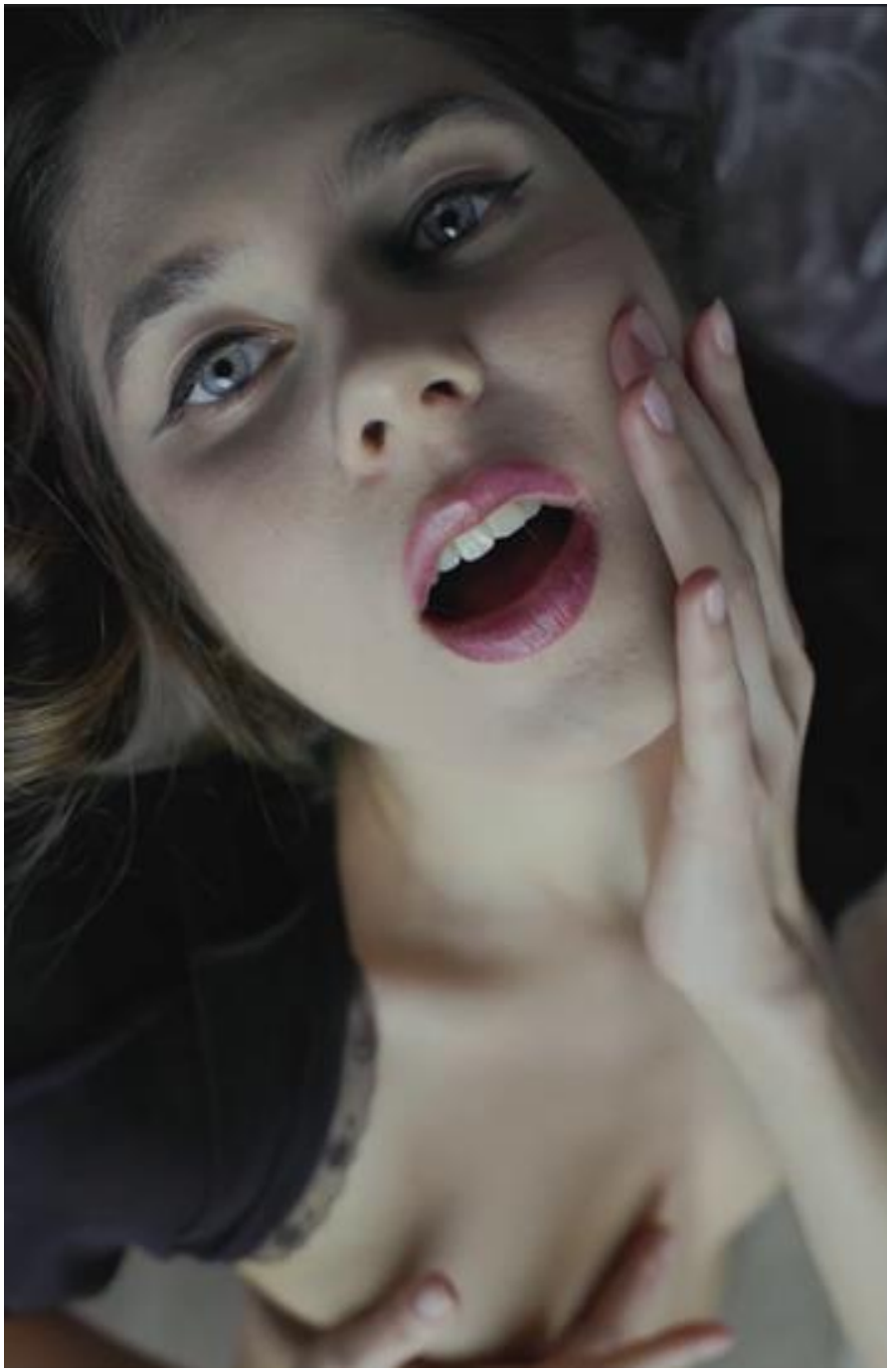
Maintenant ma petite sœur,
elle veut... des SEINS!!!

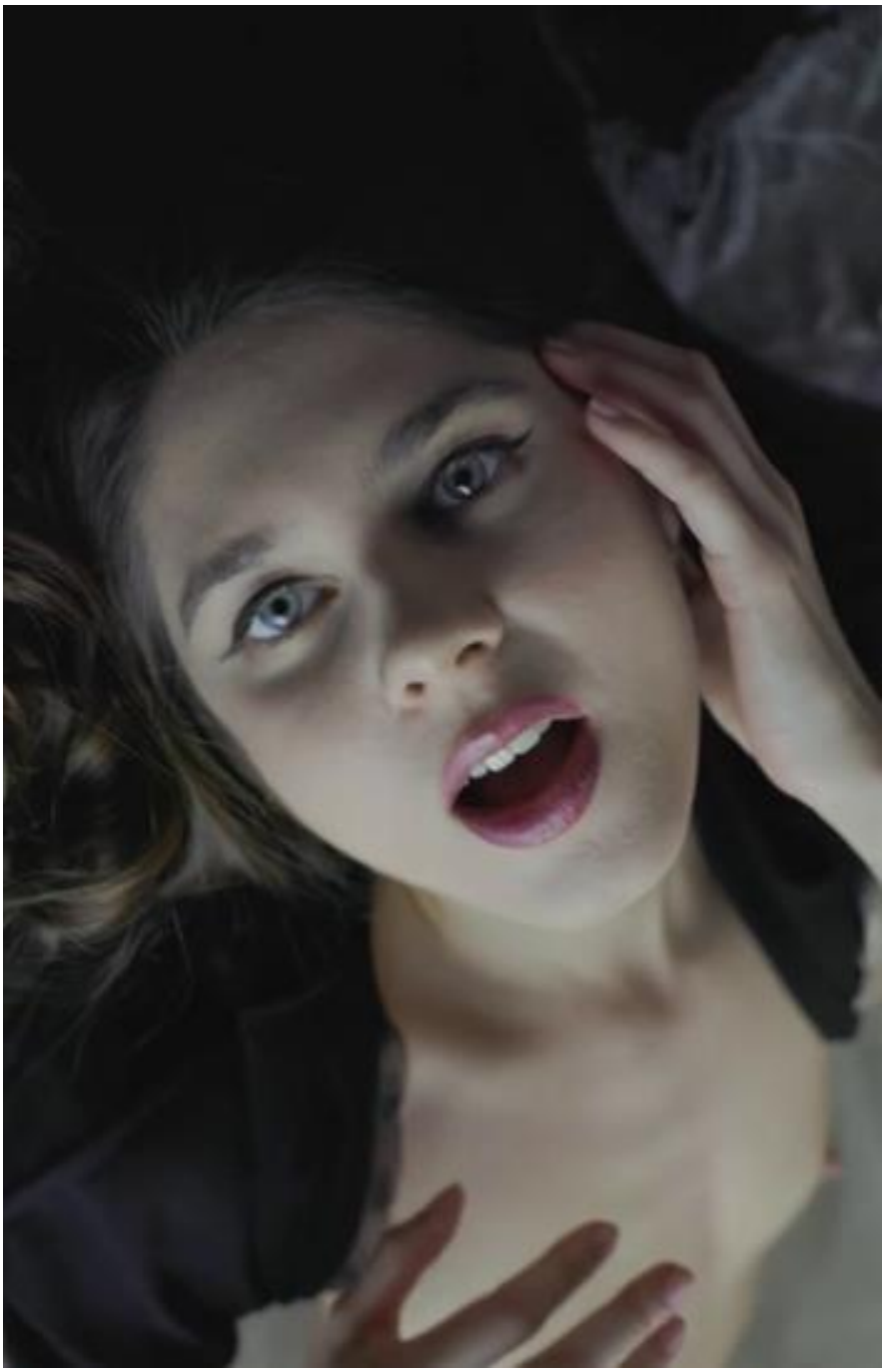
### *The Scream by Reiko*

[**Tokyo**] My friend Aki showed me her *The Woman and the Ladder* short film and invited me to do something in the same style. I found pictorials of a woman screaming and made a film of this, with each series of pictorials become shorter in length and therefore more frantic. My film seems to work!









I invite you to try your hand at such experimental film!

### *How to Tie a Kynodesme by Yuki*

[**Oxford**] I am nearly completed my Masters. I have been researching the anthropology of the male. Recently I gave a presentation about the *Kynodesme*, which was used in ancient times to bind the prepuce of the male sex. With a bound prepuce men were allowed to wrestle in public or walk through the streets of the ancient world. As long as the gland of their penis was not visible, they could walk the streets. Few people know about the *Kynodesme* and so I asked a male friend to show us how you tie one.

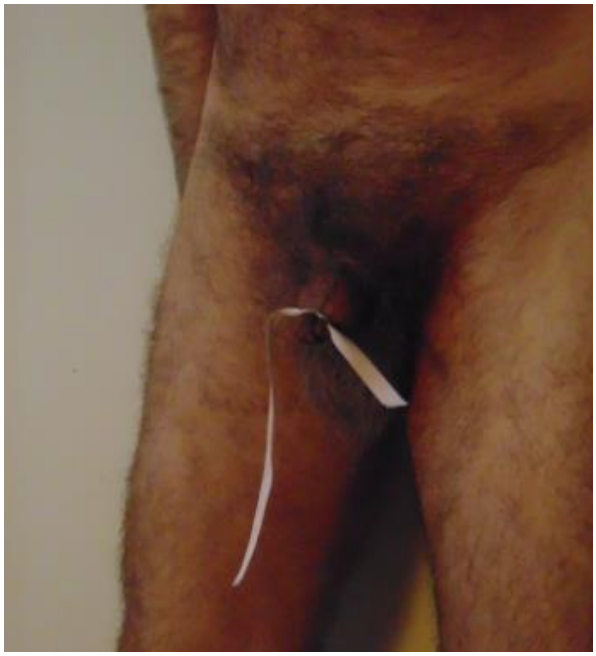
Start with a soft and colorful ribbon three times as long as the penis.

Form a loop with the ribbon.

Slip it over the penis.

Pull the prepuce close and move the ribbon to near the end of the prepuce.

Slowly and carefully draw the ribbon tight.

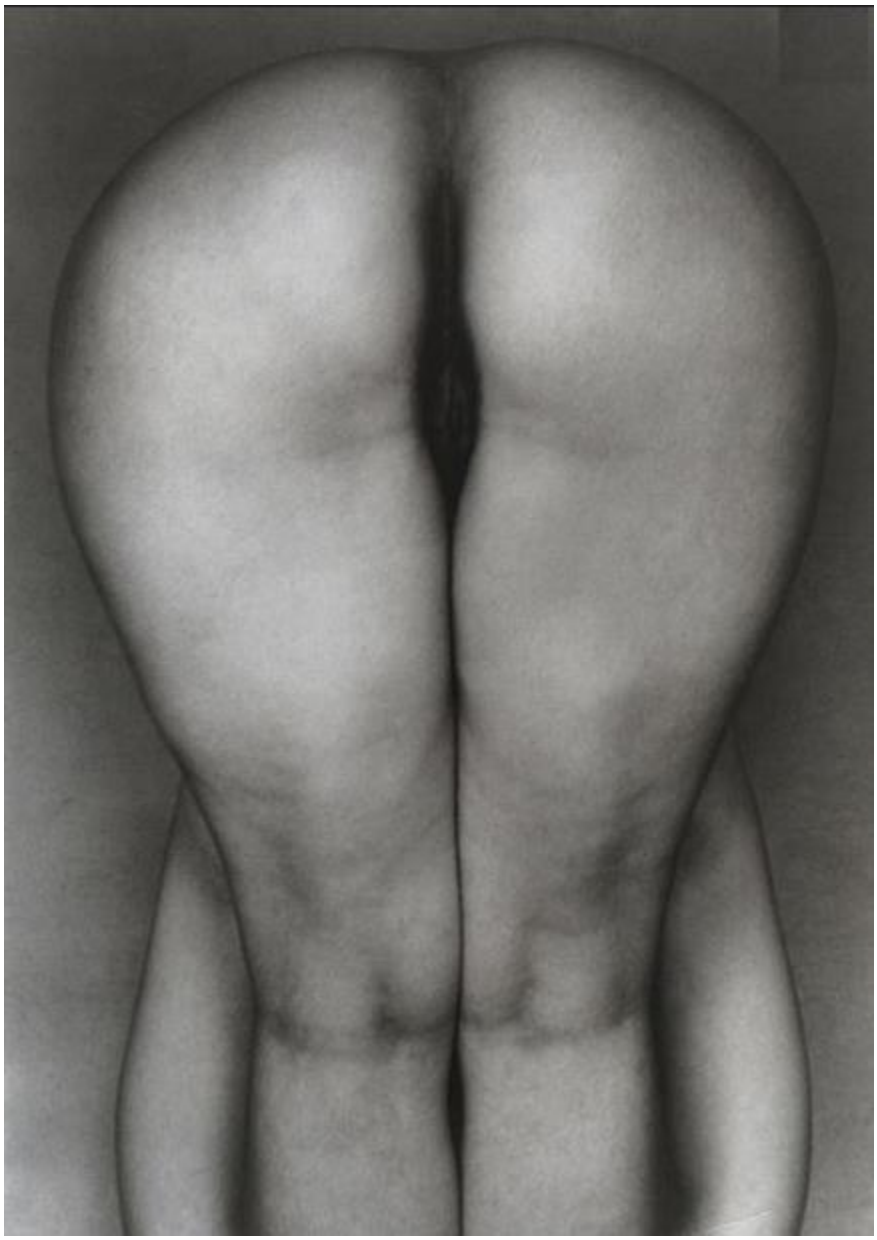


If you have done this properly the *Kynodesme* will stay on.

After a few minutes you will find the penis has gone to sleep.

Michelangelo's David has his gland hidden away inside his prepuce … in real life when he set out to slew Goliath he could not wear a Kynodesme because he was a Jewish boy who had been circumcised. You probably have notice how small his penis is, and how out of proportion his head and hands are ...

***Pictorial:  Female Figurative from 1927***



# Popcorn

{Popcorn:  Popular + Corny …}

### *The Benefit of Manuka Honey by Isabella Montsouris*

[**Montreal**] During the summer, while I was out on a hike through the woods I managed to scratch my forehead on a branch. It wasn't the first time I scratched my forehead but for some reason this summer the scratch did not heal properly.

The skin around the scratch began to inflamed and get sensitive to the touch. I started to scratch the scratch, something you should never do – but sometime this is hard not to do, especially on hot summer days.

I went to my family doctor and he simply said it was infected. That was obvious to me and I don't have a medical degree. He said to just wash the scratch, keep it dry and not to touch it. He said if things had not improved in a week to come back.

A week later I was back to see him. This time he said I should try an anti-itch hydrocortisone ointment. He gave me a prescription for the hydrocortisone ointment and I went to fill it at the pharmacy. He said if things had not improved in a week to come back.

A week later I was back to see him. Then he gave me a prescription for an antibiotic cream and I went to fill it at the pharmacy. The antibiotic was an over the counter cream which had Polymyxin B Sulphate and Gramicidin as its active ingredients. He said use for a week and if things had not improved to come back.

Twice a day I washed the scratch on my face carefully, dried it and applied the antibiotic cream. In a few days my forehead started to burn around the scratch and things seemed to get worst rather than better. It was now even more inflamed!

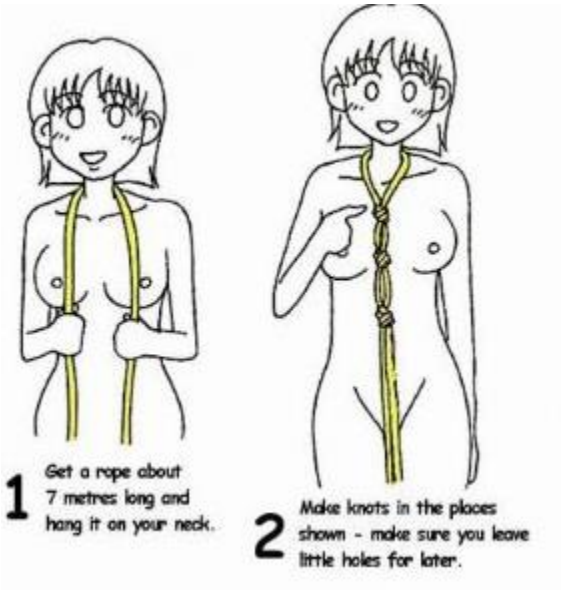
Finally I asked my grandmother for advice and she took me to the corner store and bought me some Manuka Honey from Australia and said to wash around the scratch and then apply the honey directly onto my forehead where it was inflamed. I did that twice that day and by the following morning the area around the scratch no longer felt hot to the touch. By the end of the week the scratch was no longer infected and it began to heal. Ten days later the scratch had all but disappeared.

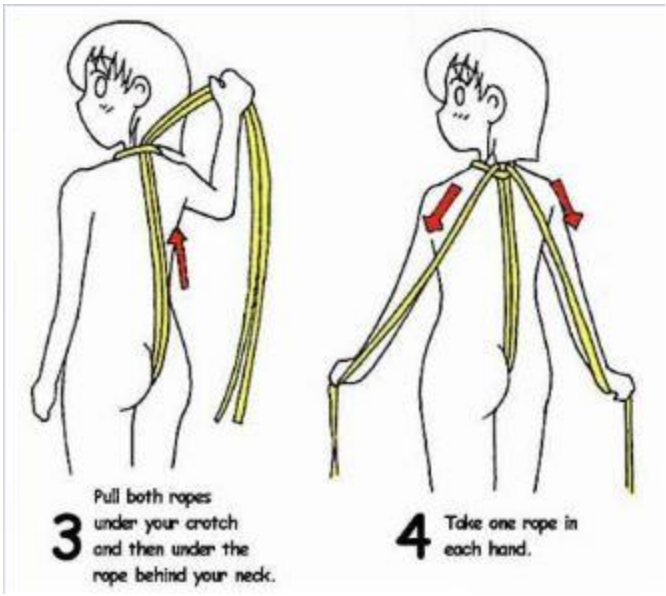
Maybe I should have gone to my grandmother first? But it is still good to go see your doctor. Perhaps when medical science can't give the answers we search for and need Mother Nature can? I now keep Manuka Honey in my bathroom cabinet and not in the kitchen.

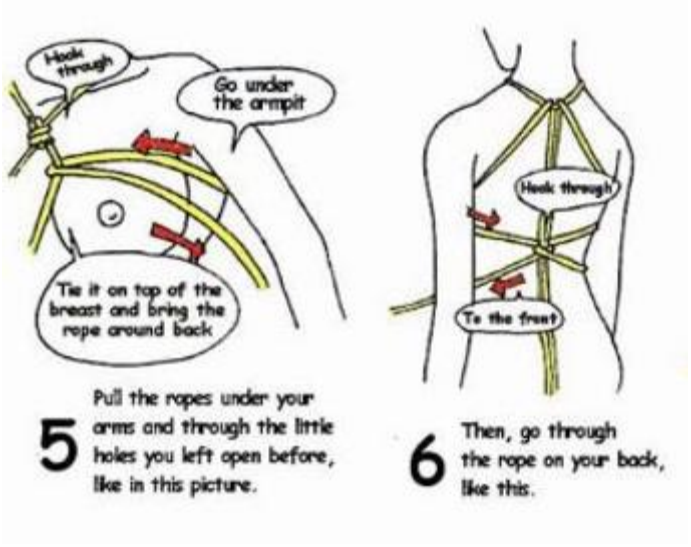
Obviously one of the benefits of Manuka Honey is that it is a natural antibiotic for some forms of common skin infections.

### *Having Fun with Rope by Yuki*

[**Oxford**] I am bored with all my studying. I did this as a distraction.

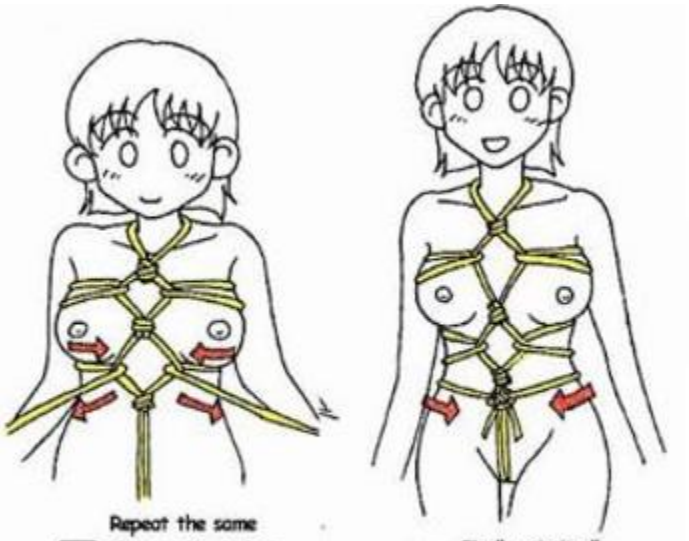




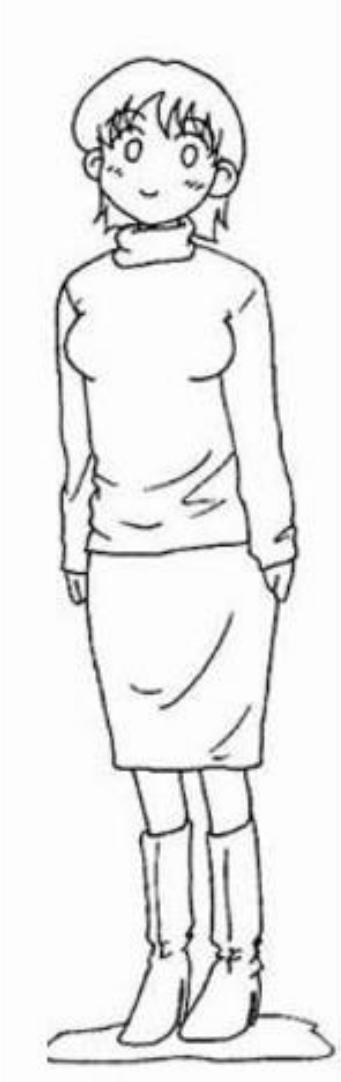

5 Pull the ropes under your arms and through the little holes you left open before, like in this picture.

6 Then, go through the rope on your back, like this.



7 Repeat the same thing again, and go around your back one more time.

8 Finally, tie it all together in the front!



You can wear clothes over it.

No one will know what you have underneath.

You might want to put Vaseline on the rope that is

over your vulva to keep it from chaffing …

***Pictorial: Female Figurative from 1928***

# The Surréal

## *La Vie de Boheme by Samuel Putnam*

Back in the Montparnasse of the 1880's and the 1890's there was a picturesque figure by the name of Alfred Jarry. To most readers outside of France he is not even a name, but every cultivated Frenchman is acquainted with the one masterpiece that this indubitable genius produced: the right Rabelaisian playlet, Ubu Roi, which is properly regarded as the outstanding modern work in the tradition of Rabelais, but which, by reason of its utter untranslatability, has remained practically unknown to the world at large. It was, however, for his vivid personality and the colorful "Bohemian" life he led as much as for the four or five books he wrote that he was noted, just as Verlaine was for his absinthe verte or Baudelaire had been for his green beard and his Venus noire. The Jarry anecdotes are innumerable, but there is one in particular that would seem to hold a moral for those that look for it

Living in one of the suburbs (Puteaux, I believe it was), Jarry was in the habit of returning home every night, no matter what the hour or what the quality or quantity of the wine he had imbibed, upon his trusty bicycle. One evening, having become sufficiently exhilarated at the heure de Vaperitif and perceiving that it looked like rain, he decided to make an early start; but he had not gone far when he was caught in the downpour. Now, as it happened, he had on a pair of new shoes that day and did not fancy the idea of getting them wet; so he stopped and took them off, then mounted again and resumed his homeward way. A good housewife who had come out upon a balcony for some purpose or other caught sight of him and stood staring open-mouthed. With matronly solicitude, she called down to him: "You poor young man,

have you no shoes?" Pedaling vigorously along, Alfred shouted back: "Don't let it worry you, Madame. I have some nicely polished ones in my pocket."

I have hinted that there is a moral to the tale. There is. On no subject, perhaps, has there been a greater amount of sentimental nonsense written than on that of the so-called "vie de Boheme." Henri Murger has much to answer for! He, you may recall, was the penniless youth who, after having served a literary apprenticeship as Count Tolstoy's secretary, arrived at the conclusion that writers and artists like himself should secede from society and form a country of their own to be called "Bohemia." Had not his Scenes de la Vie de Boheme reached the operatic stage as Puccini's La Boheme, the damage might not have been so extensive; but as it is, the sorrows of Mimi have created a myth and a tradition, a myth that is constantly tending to take on life but never quite does.

The thing may be said to have started on an evening in 1830 when Theophile Gautier appeared at the premiere of Victor Hugo's Hernani wearing his flaming red vest. It certainly started with the mid-century romantics and their revolt against the cramping confines of bourgeois life; whence the red vest, the green beard, the hashish, the dusky Venus, and all the rest. The French say: e-pater le bourgeois; and this business of shocking the staid middle-class citizen has been going on for more than a hundred years. Just why the Left Bank and the boulevard du Montparnasse should have come to be the habitat of the tribe might be a bit hard to explain; one would have to explain why it is that Parisian intellectual life in general has so largely tended to center there.

In any event, it was upon one of these terraces that Verlaine sat and sipped his absinthe:

J'ai bu ce soir une absinthe verte …

and there are still old-timers about the Quarter who his staggering home when he had had his fill. Today it is pernod, but the place remains Montparnasse. Montmartre had its day—in the early part of the century, when Picasso, Braque, Derain, and others were laying the foundations of Cubism—but it is back to Montparnasse that they seem to gravitate. Not even Picasso can stay away entirely.

In a preceding paragraph I have spoken of the "business" of shocking the bourgeoisie, and a business it has long since be- come so far as the bourgeois himself is concerned. The latter's first reaction—in the 1850's, let us say—may have been one of shocked surprise, but he very soon came to view the matter much as the housewife did as she watched the barefoot Jarry upon his bicycle: "You poor young man !" For these denizens of Bohemia were poor, very poor indeed, as a rule. And it did not take the canny bourgeois long to discover how the picturesque poverty of the real artists might be advantageously exploited.

Thanks to ha Bohbne and similar works, many persons doubtless still think of life in a place like Montparnasse or Greenwich Village as a round of gay, carefree revels inter- larded with a little soul-satisfying labor on the part of the artist or writer. Legends have grown up which tend to perpetuate this

conception, such as that of the kindly, whimsical Pere Tanguy, where Cezanne used to leave his canvases to be sold at prices that brought him anywhere from eight to twenty dollars apiece. Most of us do not know that Renoir's "Jeune fille dans un jardin" netted the painter six dollars, while his "Pont du chateau" earned for him eight dollars. When the same artist's "Vue du Pont-Neuf' brought as high as sixty dollars, this was looked upon as a fabulous sum; twenty dollars for "La Source" was nearer an average ; yet before the end of the century this last-mentioned canvas was to be resold for $14,000!

Such is the not-so-romantic background to la vie de Boheme. It was when we Americans began arriving in the 1920's that a new form of commercialism sprang up alongside the older variety. The artist, especially the painter, was still exploited pretty much as always. In the past, this exploitation had been, so to speak, between one Frenchman and another; but now that the postwar influx of newcomers from all over Europe and the Americas, and above all, from that "land of gold," the United States, had set in, there were cafes, bars, restaurants, brothels, to be opened to cater to this new clientele. And so it is not strange if Montparnasse came to take on somewhat the aspect of the new and gaudy Montmartre—never quite so bad as that, it is true, but with a distinct air of showmanship about it nonetheless. The little bistro kept by two brothers at the corner of the boulevard Raspail and the boulevard du Montparnasse must be enlarged into the present cafe du Dome; the cafe Select had to undergo a transformation of atmosphere; and not many years later the big and almost painfully modern Coupole was to open its doors. The Rotonde alone, a good deal less populous than it once had been, clung persistently to the character it had won for itself as a place where one could sit and think and

be alone with his sorrows. It seemed that there now were few who cared to be alone—who wished to think?—in the noisy, crowded place that the Quarter had be- come. I do not know how it was in the early 'twenties; those who came over then tell me that a good deal of the old Montparnasse lingered on; but by the time I arrived in the middle of the decade, what with the ever-increasing third-class-tourist trade and "exiles" coming in by the boatload, the scene had begun to assume the appearance of a Bohemia made to order, with a suave proprietor in the background, rubbing his hands in unctuous satisfaction and keeping a watchful eye on "la caisse."

This was the Montparnasse that most of the expatriates found; for the bulk of the migration came from 1925 to 1930. Beneath it all a very real artistic and intellectual life went on; but the workers tended more and more to retire to the Odeon or some other quiet quarter, to the suburbs, or to the provinces, while toward the end a number of what might be described as runaway colonies were to spring up, in Majorca, Cagnes-sur-Mer, Mirmande, and elsewhere. Few, however, were able to tear themselves away completely from the carrefour Vavin, which remained the exiles' crossroads and meeting place; and down in Provence in the late afternoon one would suddenly feel an irresistible impulse and would board an overnight train to breakfast at the Dome.

Since the Hotel Raspail (which, incidentally, was very respectable) had been recommended to us, my wife and I without any intention on our part found ourselves thrown into the midst of it all. We did not stay there long but soon moved to a suburb. Suresnes, Seaux, Fontenay-aux-Roses—each in turn was to be home to us. In 1930, when I became associate editor of This Quarter, we

came back to Paris and, after a brief sojourn in the rue La Grange, down near Notre Dame and the Sorbonne, we took an apartment for one hectic season at Number 8, rue Delambre, practically above Lou Wilson's Dingo bar of The Sun Also Rises fame; it was also a few steps from the Dôme and directly back of the Coupole kitchen, which used to provide us with an orchestral accompaniment of rattling dishes. Later, we moved to the edge of the midi, dug in at Mirmande in the Drome, in the ancient province of Dauphine, and I became a house-owner and taxpayer at a cost of three thousand francs, or about a hundred and twenty dollars in American money. But like all the rest of them, I would find myself catching that train for Paris, and my first words to the chauffeur at the gore would be: "Carrefour Vavin."

I will leave it to some future social-psychologist, who was not there, to explain just what the hold was that Montparnasse had on us: those two or three squares centering about the intersection of the boulevards. Why did the "exiles" tend to gather here in this garish environment, with so much that was palpably false about it, to associate almost exclusively with other Americans and grow in upon themselves? Any satisfactory answer to this question would have to take into account the general atmosphere of postwar disillusionment which for Americans was given a literary expression in Hemingway's The Sun Also Rises, published in the fall of 1926. This novel, as Gertrude Stein well perceived, summed up the self-sensed hopelessness of a generation. If you couldn't throw the bottle, you could always drink from it, as Hemingway put it. And drink they did. It was not the first time that a book had been transmuted into real life. What of Werther and his sorrows? The creator of Werther did not commit suicide, but many of his youthful readers felt that such an act was

the logical corollary to his work. Having put the theme into literature, Hemingway was now edging away from the setting he had described and was hard at work down in the Saint-Germain quarter even as, in the Dingo, young Americans just over were doing their best to imitate Jake and his "let's have an- other one" friends. Yet he would drift back now and then; and so would we all, for sheer and facile relaxation or on the chance of meeting someone worth while.

The Sun Also Rises may in fact be said to mark the point of cleavage between the earlier and the later batch of "exiles," by embalming in a work of fiction which was to become a modem classic the spirit that animated those who came in 1921 or shortly after. It was a literary post-mortem. Many of the original emigres had been in the war or at least had fought and lost the battle of America that followed; whereas those who arrived in the late 'twenties were, frequently, of a still younger, unscarred generation—unscarred, that is to say, by anything other than the prosperity-crazed America of Calvin Coolidge, the America that preceded the crash of 1929. These latter had no great disillusionment to drown, they were not rebels, and often they were not genuine writers or artists and scarcely pretended to be. Paris at twenty-five francs to the dollar had become a "cheapie" a far more exciting place to live than Greenwich Village with its bathtub gin and prohibition prices. It was "expatriates" such as these that availed themselves of the Hemingway tradition, claiming a heritage that was not rightfully theirs.

It would, however, be slanderous if one were to convey the impression that all Americans in the Paris of the later 'twenties were of this sort. What I have

been trying to say ail along is that the scene was a decidedly mixed one; and it was this very fact that lent it its garish colors and its peculiar fascination. There were many hard workers in the American colony, on both banks of the river. Ford Madox Ford had published Hemingway's Torrents of Spring and given impulse to a new and vital literary movement through the pages of his Transatlantic Review. A new and earnest group was coming up around transition, edited by Eugene Jolas and Elliot Paul; and in the next half-dozen years there were to be other magazines, schools of art, and literary-artistic manifestations of various sorts. The little box of a Dingo might be packing the tourists in nightly, tighter than the proverbial sardine; but some of us did manage to get some work done even after our friend Jimmy the Barman had forsaken Lou Wilson to open a place (or places, one after another) of his own.

On the Right Bank, in the neighborhood of the place de l'Opera, there were the industrious newspapermen: John Gunther, in charge of the Chicago Daily News office, Bill Bird of the New York Sun , and others. At that time I was doing a Paris art letter for the News, and used to drop in to see Gunther occasionally. I was impressed not only by his industry but by his dignity, his assurance, his serious and intelligent interest in the European political and social scene. He would give a party at his home now and then, but it would be very different from those of the Quarter. The same was true of Bird and most of the other men I met. It was true, also, of the best men on the Paris staffs of the New York Herald and the Chicago Tribune. On the latter paper was Waverley Root, who was later to write The Secret History of the War (the Second World War), and who was then conducting a literary page. Elliot Paul, at first literary editor and then city editor of the Paris edition of the Chicago

Tribune, was seldom seen around the Dôme but belonged rather to the transition group of the place de l'Odeon quarter; he was one American who mingled with the French and had a passionate desire to know them. There was Ruth Harris, art correspondent of the Hew York. Times, for whom I sometimes substituted, and there were Archibald MacLeish, Glenway Wescott, Bravig Imbs, George Antheil, and others, all of whom kept very much to themselves, the majority of Montparnassians not even being aware of their presence.

Within its own vaguely precise boundaries the Quarter had a social-artistic life quite apart from the cafes. This life centered in certain salons. When I first came to Paris, it was to the studio apartment of Ford Madox Ford and Stella Bowen that those Americans went who were fortunate enough to be invited and who cared to listen to the one-time collaborator of Conrad and discoverer of D. H. Lawrence as he reminisced of his yesterdays or discussed, with equal enthusiasm, the new and promising talents of today for which he was constantly on the watch. By reason of the Transatlantic Review and his having published Hemingway, Ford rather dominated the picture at the moment, and, being kindly disposed and wholly free of literary snobbishness, liked to gather about him those who had some respect for writing as an art with a great and noble tradition behind it. Later, after he and Stella Bowen had parted company, he started his Thursday afternoons and his much-talked-of sonnet-writing evenings, while Stella threw open her studio to British and American painters, writers, and others.

It was at her place one afternoon that I had the privilege of a private lecture from Edith Sitwell on the subject of Rabelais. When informed by our hostess that this was the field in which I was working, Miss Sitwell had exclaimed: "I'm so glad to meet a scholar. I greatly prefer them to writers. I'm so tired of literary people! And now, do tell me all about Rabelais." Whereupon, she told me all about him.

There were other studios and drawing rooms that served as gathering places. One was the Montparnasse apartment of Bill and Mary Widney, where one was always likely to find some of the transition crowd or the monocled Tristan Tzara, founder of Dada, and a young French Surrealist or two. The Widneys were charming and intelligent hosts and they and their cocktail parties were popular. Lee Hersch the painter and his wife Virginia, the novelist (one of Ford's discoveries), gave interesting evenings at which one might meet almost anyone from the American colony, while over on the lle- Saint-Louis the Marvin Lowenthals had a serious-minded intellectual circle of their own. And Ossip Zadkine, the Russianborn sculptor, who speaks English beautifully and who for this reason was a friend of the Anglo-American contingent, would often have us in of an afternoon to view his work and talk of art with his French and Russian confreres. The conversation here was polyglot, witty, and rapid-fire, keyed to Zadkine's own quick-tensioned personality.

When the Surrealists congregated by themselves at the cocktail hour, it was often at the home of Bernard Fay, a professor at the Sorbonne then becoming known in America as the biographer of Franklin and Washington. In view of his choice of these democratic subjects, it seems strange that he should later

have become a collaborator of the Nazis during their occupation of Paris, being appointed by them to the post of director of the Bibliotheque Nationale. I do not think that any of us could have been brought to believe that such a thing was possible, for Fay then appeared to be deeply and sincerely in love with the American democratic ideal. I can see him yet, a little crippled man hobbling up to my table at the Deux-Magots. Like Louis Aragon, he spoke an English that would put the average American to shame, and he would talk fluently of his latest young protege; for I was acting at the time as a kind of unofficial scout for the publishing house of Covici-Friede

I do recall that it struck me as a little strange that Fay's interests should be, apparently, about evenly divided between the heroes of our American Revolution and the frivolous-capering Surrealists. There was something a little incongruous about it, for both were real passions with him. The Surrealists were forever at war among themselves, but in Fay's apartment the orthodox ones and the secessionists got along well enough together. It was a weird assemblage, speaking a weirder idiom. It was not that the language was surrealistic in character; both the actions and the speech of the guests reminded me, rather, of American homosexuals.

In the meantime, the one real salon in all Paris, possibly in all the world, in the eighteenth-century meaning of the term, was that kept by Nathalie Barney in the rue Jacob. Miss Barney was the Cincinnati, Ohio, girl who, arriving in France in the early years of the century, became the close friend of the late Remy de Gourmont, to whom he wrote the Letters to the Amazon. It was to her place that Proust used to come, as Valery, Gide, and others of the older

generation still did. Miss Barney at this period was engaged in preparing a collection of letters sent her by famous writers, with a view to publication in book form. On a recent visit to England, she had spoken of the matter to Aldington, and he had brought us together with an eye to the American market.

She was good enough to ask me to her afternoons, and there I found a setting that made me think at once of what I had read in my youth of Madame de Stael and Miss Barney's other illustrious predecessors. There was the grace, the wit, the dignified abandon—everything but the powdered perukes – which, so I imagined, must have characterized the salons of a former day. France's leading men of letters, Academicians, members of the Institute, Sorbonne professors, beautiful ladies, even a stray countess or two, were present, with the hostess to all appearances playing an unobtrusive role, although it was obvious that the "Amazon" was the center around whom all revolved. One had the feeling that this was not by any means due solely to her long association with de Gourmont, but rather was to be accounted for by the charm of her own personality, her swift intelligence, her ready and at times biting wit, her warm graciousness.

There was, certainly, nothing in America to compare with the rue Jacob, unless it was Muriel Draper's Thursday afternoons in the late 'twenties and early 'thirties, and there—well, the aged-in-the-wood atmosphere of the Academy, the Sorbonne, the Prousts, the Gides, the Valerys, was lacking.

On the afternoon that I first visited Miss Barney's, Paul Valdry, being absent, was the subject of conversation and there were some very sharp comments. It was commonly conceded in literary circles around Paris that Miss Barney had very largely "made" Valery in the first place; for reputations, I found, were still being fashioned in salons like this, and what you heard in the drawing room one day you would not be surprised to read a day or two later in LeFigaro, Le Temps, Le Matin, or Les Nouvelles Utteraires. But now it seemed that M. Valery, following his elevation to the Academy, was becoming a bit too sententious for Miss Barney's taste, and rumor had it that she was about to "unmake" him. After a number of typically Gallic two-edged remarks had been tossed about, including a few in damning defense of the absent one. Miss Barney spoke up. "Le pauvre!" she exclaimed, and quickly added: "By the way, have you read So-and-So's latest—?" I suspected then that what I had heard was true; and as a matter of feet, Valery's reputation—in Paris—did take a sudden drop for a while.

My most amusing memory of Miss Barney's has to do with a certain elderly savant of the Sorbonne, a little birdlike fellow with a peaked gray beard who was bent on staying young. Among the guests was an exceptionally beautiful woman of the kind that radiates sex, and the aged Sorbonnist, whose lecture-room was a famous one, was getting more than his share of the refractions. He was like an old horse turned out to pasture that is trying to be a colt once more. He capered and cavorted, literally danced around the lady, who led him on most expertly, to the vast delight of everybody present. The conversation that accompanied all this as the professor made his whinnying exit was one

whose subtle Rabelaisian quality Remy de Gourmont himself would have appreciated.

It is probably safe to say that a large majority of Americans in the Quarter, or, as far as that goes, in Paris, had never so much as heard of Miss Barney and her salon. Pound and Aldington, who had known de Gourmont and were her friends, would look in when they were in town; Ford, Pierre Loving, and perhaps one or two others went there; but to the English-speaking colony in general the rue Jacob was as re- mote as all things French outside the bistro, the cafe, and the concierge, of their daily lives—as foreign to them as was Gallic culture as a whole: the literature, the art, the scholarship, the thinking of the country where they had chosen to take up their residence. How many of them, I wondered, had even heard of de Gourmont, much less read his work; yet at the time of his death, a little more than a decade before, he had been one of the most famous of modern writers.

The Americans were a good deal more likely to prefer such a "salon" as that kept by the Countess M – The "Countess" was one of Montparnasse's outstanding characters. She was supposed to be of the Italian nobility, and if I put her title in quotation marks, it is not that we especially doubted her lineage; it is simply.that none of us had ever seen her escutcheon nor did anyone care so long as she continued to serve good Scotch. She may very well have been a real countess, for we had seen other ladies whom we knew to be entitled to such a distinction—the Baroness Elsa, for example, friend of Margaret Anderson, Jane Heap, and the Little Review coterie — who in their way were quite as scatterbrained as she. Italian she assuredly was, as her

swarthy complexion and her accent showed, and she had about her an air of distinguished dowdiness that reminded me of the late Mrs. Potter Palmer.

The Countess and her mysterious consort, who was rumored to be a captain of the Scottish Highlanders but whom we had decided to call Sam, were invariably short of funds; but that, too, was by no means out of keeping with the peerage or with a certain type of the military from across the Channel. And this little circumstance did not prevent the pair from giving, in their migratory apartment, what were, perhaps, the most lavish and the most outlandish parties the Quarter had ever seen. Lavish, that is to say, in a certain sense. There was sure to be champagne and caviar in the drawing room—the supply of these items was mysterious and unfailing—but out in the kitchen the Countess might be arguing with a trades- man over credit for a loaf of bread or two or a pound of

For she had a scheme for financing the menage which sometimes worked and sometimes didn't and more often went with hitches. This scheme was the laudable one of making well-to-do Americans of the Right Bank and the tourist variety pay for the entertainment, and not infrequently the temporary board and lodging (a place to sleep against the wall), of "*les pauvres artistes*," meaning those whom she saw around the Dôme every day and who, she took for granted, must be as short of money as she and the captain were, in which assumption she was usually right.

I have neglected to mention that the Countess M was a painter of sorts, specializing in portraits of those she thought could pay for them. Some of her

efforts were surprisingly good, with a kind of unstriven-for Douanier Rousseau naivete, but most of them were pretty terrible. She would "do" a portrait from memory (as Baudelaire once recommended) and without the knowledge of the "sitter," who would be shown the work of art the next time he called and at the same time would be informed that he "owed" the sum of 2,500 francs or whatever the traffic would bear. Occasionally there were protests, but usually not. The Countess knew her "patrons"—all too well in many cases. They were, commonly, moneyed dabblers in an overnight Bohemia who preferred to keep the "thrilling," the "exciting," experience wholly separate from their Right Bank or transatlantic existences; and they would accordingly pay without too much demurring. They would pay, and for a short while, a very short while, there would be bread and coffee to go with the champagne and caviar.

I recall one early morning when we all fell asleep around the Countess's "studio," propped against the wall as was our custom. As I dropped off, I had a hazy vision of our hostess engaged in earnest and voluble conversation with Abraham Lincoln Gillespie, who at the moment was the latest discovery of Eugene Jolas and transition and whose "works" were creating a sensation on the Left Bank, where he was a well-known figure. A Philadelphia high school teacher until he was tossed on his head in an automobile accident, Gillespie had ever since been talking like the "Work in Progress"—the nearest available comparison—and had recently begun to write in a manner that made Joyce at his most Joycean appear disconcertingly pellucid. Jolas, naturally, could not let such a find as this escape him

And now, here they were, Line and the Countess, standing in front of the latter's most recent canvas as she explained it to him in sputtering Italian, a language he did not understand, while he gave her his "criticism" in Gillespie-ese, which no one could understand. They were getting along swimmingly, each with champagne glass in hand ; and when I was awakened some hours later by a midday sun streaming through the window, the first thing I saw was a pair of very crossed eyes staring at me from the other side of the room. Line was sleeping with his eyes open as he always

Speaking of our nobility ... There was the "Duke of Montparnasse," the tall and impressive Billy West, who, dressed in the most impeccable Park Avenue manner, not infrequently in formal afternoon or evening attire, would saunter up and down the Boulevard past the terraces. The elegant, prosperous, affable "Duke" was our link with that American-international sporting world of the Right Bank of which we knew so little, most of us. Today, he will be found in the artists' colony at Woodstock, N.Y., where he is proprietor of the "Chateau Montparnasse."

Nor should one forget the Russian "Princess" who went by the name of Maria de Naglowska. Founder and sole member of a mystic cult, with weird neo-Egyptian rites, she would sit in the cafe Rotonde by the hour, reading from her own "sacred scriptures" to an "apostle" or two—that is to say, someone who had been unable to elude her—and then would go off into a most realistic trance. Her little publication. *La Flèche,* which she peddled around Montparnasse, had to do with new forms of "ecstasy," "body dynamics," and the like. She also spoke of dark mysteries which were celebrated on the

Christian Sabbath. Talk to her a little while and you would discover that, like so many others about the Quarter, she was running away from something. In her case it was “those terrible Bolsheviks.”

Meanwhile, in the Dôme across the street, sat Ilya Ehrenburg, the Bolshevik journalist.

There was, in short, never any lack of “characters” among us. One of the best known and most popular of these was Jimmy the Barman, whom many of us saw every night in the week A one-time pugilist from Liverpool, he had started as a bartender and then had set up in business for himself. Happy, generous, unbelievably guileless in the matter of credit, he was constantly going bankrupt and opening again in a new location, to which the entire Quarter would flock for more free drinks at the “Grand Opening.” It was only when, after clos- ing hours at his own place, he had imbibed a little too much at the Dôme that he became bellicose, and then presumably just to see if he had retained his fighting form. (He usually discovered that he hadn’t.) The next day he would show up without his shoe-laces, and we would all know that the gendarmes had had to provide him with a lodging for the night. The shoe-laces were removed to keep prisoners from hanging themselves, and Jimmy’s never could be found; there was a rumor to the effect that someone had bribed an agent and was making a collection of them. Invariably good-natured when sober and behind the bar, he would put up with any amount of ribbing on the subject from Herbert Gorman, Bob McAlmon, E. E. Cummings, or any of the other regulars.

I have met a good many barmen in my time, but I have never known another Jimmy. When a customer became impossibly obstreperous, our friend from Liverpool, who had borne everything with the utmost patience up to that point, would reach across the mahogany with a professional haymaker and put the fellow to sleep, as gently and as painlessly as possible; after which, he would go out in front of the bar, pick the chap up, dust him off, and—as soon as the victim had regained consciousness—apologize to him. He then would call a taxi, with directions to the chauffeur to see the man safely home, and to top it all, would pay the fare ! Is it any wonder that we loved him?

Later, under the title of This Must Be the Place (the tourist's customary remark as he sought out the rendezvous), Jimmy was to publish his ghost-written memoirs, which, with an introduction by Ernest Hemingway, were to have a very respectable selling success both in England and in America.

As Hemingway has pointed out, Jimmy the Barman, like Kiki, the famous Latin Quarter model, in reality marks the saddening end of an era whose gaiety was always vastly over- estimated. Kiki was another of our personages. She has told her story in her own inimitable way in a small volume of reminiscences which was published in my translation (again with Hemingway as the preface-writer) some seventeen years ago. It is the story of more than one Parisian girl of the poorest class who, wavering between the life of a slavey (*maid-servant*) and that of a prostitute, chances to drift within the orbit of the artists' world and there becomes a Montparnasse variety of queen. For the attainment of this distinction, personality is a good deal more important than mere looks. While Kiki in her prime had a face with which painters and

photographers could achieve many effects, including a weird kind of beauty, she was certainly far from the American conception of what a model should be. Her figure, for one thing, especially as she grew older, was inclined to be dumpy; but she made up for it by a vitality and vivaciousness, a seemingly naive yet not so naive wit, and a genuine talent—she turned out to be quite a good painter, herself—that won her an unquestioned place in the annals of the Ateliers.

She had first come into prominence by posing for Man Ray, the American-born photographer, but Pascin, Foujita, Kisling, Derain, practically all the leading modernists, had been her employers at one time or another and all were extremely fond of her. It was she who held the center of the stage at studio parties and at the cafe table. I especially re- member her at cocktail time in the Coupole bar, with Andre Derain sadistically amusing himself by kicking the stool out from under her, a performance which he repeated almost nightly.

Jimmy the Barman and Kiki were, however, comparatively normal types in the Montparnasse of the 1920's, where eccentricity was the rule and every college boy over for the summer felt that he had to grow a soulful beard, to be shaved off the coming fall, upon his return to the campus. Every kind of garment was in evidence, and only the ultra-conventional stood out. It was a veritable House of all Nations, this: Frenchmen, Americans, Englishmen, Germans, Scandinavians, Spaniards, Italians, Russians, Hungarians, Poles, Bohemians, Czechs, South Americans. And for some reason, each nation appeared to have contributed its most extraordinary specimens.

There were, for example, the eight blond Icelandic giants who every night in the week were to be seen standing solemnly at the Dôme bar (au zinc), exchanging not a word, staring straight in front of them, and drinking themselves into a state of apparent rigidity; whereupon, with the precise motions of automatons, they would stalk out the door and into the night, down the boulevard du Montparnasse—to their studios, we assumed, for they were said to be painters: that was all that anyone knew about them.

And then, there was Aleister Crowley, from out the fogs of London—or was it Scotland, where it was rumored that he owned an estate? The author of the Diary of a Drug Fiend, sometimes known as "606," used to parade around the Quarter with his head shaved, save for a waxed forelock which he called "the mark of Buddha" or his "Kling-Klong." A pudgy man of fifty or thereabouts, he was addicted to kilts and plus-fours. His numerous specialties included black magic and devil-worship, alchemy, and hypnotism, and he would gravely announce a "revival of Satanism" as a literary school. He liked to tell of his orgies, which we believed were more imaginary than real. It was said that his bedroom was filled with mirrors, that he might never lose sight of himself. In addition to writing (his Memoirs sold for something like two pounds the copy under the counter in England), he painted a little and for a while was employed in this capacity by the French government, until they parted company at the government's suggestion. Wambly Bald, the Montparnasse chronicler of those days, whose imagination far exceeds Crowley's own, informs me that Aleister's best canvas was one bearing the title "Three Men Carrying a Black Goat Across the Snow to Nowhere."

Mysticism (or pseudo-mysticism), freakishness, aestheticism, sex, went hand in hand on the Rive Gauche. There was Raymond Duncan, Isadora's brother, who with his disciples went about in Greek toga and sandals and who conducted a well paying school in which painting, eurythmics, and similar subjects were taught; while out at suburban Fontainebleau was a Turkish mystic by the name of Gurdjieff, who was supposed to have taught the great Ouspensky all that the author of Tertium Organum really knew. American society women would go there and pay a handsome fee for the privilege of scrubbing the floors, carting heavy loads of brick about the grounds, and engaging in other forms of manual drudgery, for the good of their fourth-dimensional souls; and when they had completed these tasks, they were rewarded by being subtly and metaphysically insulted by the Master at dinner, after which they would be entertained with a variety of music and dancing that was almost literally "out of this world."

A. R. Orage, the well known British man of letters and editor of the New Statesman, was associated with the Fontainebleau colony and helped to confer respectability up- on the cult, while Gorham B. Munson gave it publicity in America. It was, accordingly, not strange if similar groups began to spring up in Montparnasse, with Margaret Anderson, Jane Heap, Mark Turbyfill, and others of the Little Review starting a "Gurdjieff Circle," which, under Miss Heap's leadership, met in the studio of Georgette Leblanc, famous for her long association with Maeterlinck. Now and then one of the less spiritual among us, by feigning a piety he did not fed, would with considerable difficulty

contrive to get inside the sacred precincts of the Master himself and would bring us back a report of the strange carryings-on.

Probably no one occasioned more gossip than did Willy Seabrook; and in his case, it was neither mysticism nor aestheticism, but rather sex—the peculiar forms of it that he preached and, by his own account and those of others as well, was in the habit of practicing. Willy loved to boast of his exploits: his flagellation of women, his instruments of sexual torture, his mania for human flesh, his adventures in the jungle. His account was so lurid that I am not sure how much of it was believed; but every once in a while some young woman would appear who would swear, with an abundance of convincing detail and a good deal of pride, that she had been one of his subjects and that all his stories were true as far as women were involved. We all liked Seabrook; there was an air of physical bigness about him—I can see his hulking shoulders as he entered a room—there was a vitality and heartiness that did not seem to go with decadent or morbid impulses. However, a number of weeks that I spent, in connection with a literary task, at his Mediterranean villa (he was in the money then), and long hours of conversation with him on the garden terrace at night over an especially potent bottle of Provencal fine, made me feel sure that he was indeed telling the truth; for he was an exceedingly honest person. At Toulon, he even showed me his private museum, consisting of a collection of instruments of flagellation and feminine torture, among them a cage for the amorous starving of a naked woman.

It all sounds more than a little like Sunday supplement stuff; and Willy, indeed, was proud of the fact that he had begun life as a Hearst reporter and editor.

He may have been very largely a Hearst man still in matter of content, but he had a flair for real writing, and his three great literary idols at the time I knew him were Proust, Gide, and Cocteau. He particularly admired, I remember, Cocteau's Les Enfants Terribles. As for Gide—that was a sore spot. He had found in the French writer something which led him to believe that the author of The Counterfeiters ought to like the work of one who had written The Magic Island. But Gide didn't. William Aspenwall Bradley had given the latter a copy of the book; and after reading it, Gide said to Bradley: "I don't think I care to meet the man who wrote that." Sea- brook was deeply hurt, and brooded over the rebuff; to him it was inexplicable.

With Willy, one always had the feeling that there was something driving him on—and drive him it did, through the asylum and to his death. He was another who was running away. The son of a minister, he was a fugitive from the Bible Belt; and while he might take the rites of voodoo with the utmost seriousness, I can hear his favorite expletive, "Hogwash!" when the Scopes trial or the attitudes of American fundamentalists were mentioned.

Not all our Montparnasse characters were picturesque or fantastic ones. Some were tragic: fine lives that had somehow been strangely twisted out of shape. I think of Homer Bevans —Homer, who would sit all day long on the terrace of the Dome, a highball in front of him, staring off into space across the

boulevards as though they were some illimitable plain, and then, when night came, would move around the corner to the Dingo to stand for long hours at the bar and be jostled by a crowd of strangers with only now and then some acquaintance to nod to him. Get to know him, as a few of us did (everyone knew him by sight), and you would find him to be gentle, generous, lovable, cultivated, and urbane; and this was the man whom Elliot Paul was later to take as the prototype for his detective story hero, Homer Evans.

He was a sculptor who had started life as an engineer. Having made his pile, or at any rate enough to live on, he had given up engineering and turned to music, and had played in the New York Philharmonic Orchestra as a flutist. But music palled after a while and sculpture beckoned. And then, somehow, he had come to abandon music, sculpture, everything, for his highball glass. He kept this up for years, day and night, until he began losing his eyesight. It was then that, as in the case of Stearns, his friends intervened and brought him back to America.

I ran into Homer in Greenwich Village one evening, shortly after my return to the States. He was in the company of James T. Farrell, and it was the first time I had ever seen him perfectly sober, although I had never seen him visibly drunk. He was back at his sculpture, he told me, and did his best to appear interested in his work, but … There was something lacking, a gap that could not be filled—something, I fancied, like the void an opium smoker feels when the pipe is taken from him. I heard not long after that he had suddenly died.

It was frequently hard to draw the line between the eccentric more or less consciously exploiting his eccentricity and the real artist in whose brain something had slipped, or who, for one reason or another, seemed to have lost his hold on life. Sometimes, of course, it was artistic frustration, inability to face the fact that one was not, after all, a painter or writer and might as well have stayed in America and gone into butter and eggs or a stockbroker's office. This undoubtedly helped to swell the custom at Jimmy's and the other drinking places, but it was not an explanation that covered many of the cases we saw about us.

It was particularly disillusioning to encounter certain idols of one's reading youth who in their graying years had turned drably Bohemian or unpleasantly exotic. In this connection I am reminded of Frank Harris, with his waxed mustache, his rouged cheeks, his postprandial emetics (an imitation of the old Roman sybarites), and his memories of Shaw and Wilde and Lord Alfred Douglas. When he tired of his haunts in Nice, Harris would occasionally transfer to Montparnasse for a brief interval his growing paunch and dull-thudding quips. I had been interested in meeting him at first, for I remembered that this was the man who once had written one of the best of American short stories, "The Bomb," and who also had done a praiseworthy job as magazine editor in the muckracking era. Possibly I should have been warned by his Life and Loves; but I think that I was curious to see just what had happened to him.

We met one night at the home of a mutual acquaintance. The one other guest was a woman reporter, a brilliant young Irish girl. Upon being informed that we wrote for the papers, Harris at once threw his nose in the air and observed:

“I don’t think I care for journalists.” It did not take us long to decide that we did not care for Mr. Harris, and we retired to a far corner of the room to amuse ourselves. The guest of honor was greatly put out at this and fumed and snorted for the rest of the evening, which was a short one as far as we were concerned. He reminded me a little of Mary Garden on one of her uppity days. He seemed to grow willfully more asinine as he grew older.

Emma Goldman was another disappointment, a far greater one than Harris. I saw her now most often on the terrace of the Select, surrounded by a group of Lesbians. I would look at her and memories would come flooding back: memories of college days, of Mother Earth read surreptitiously, of Strindberg and other European dramatists of whom we had never heard until she introduced them to us, of anarchist meetings, police raids, and newspaper headlines; memories of Margaret Anderson and Jane Heap, of the Little Review epoch in Chicago, and the cult of “aristocratic anarchism.” The Emma of the 1920’s scarcely looked like the bogey-woman who once had frightened the American bourgeois out of his slumbers. She did not even care to talk about those days, as I discovered when I met her one evening at a studio party at Virginia Hersch’s, and naively tried to tell her what I felt I owed to her. She was bored. “Let’s have another drink,” she said.

For something had happened to Emma, and I thought I knew what that something was. It was the Russian Revolution of 1917. She had been to the Soviet Union and had not liked what she found there. The “revolution” had been betrayed. No free-love, do-as-you-like, individualistic-anarchistic paradise. She and the young Soviets had parted, some while since, with mutual

recriminations, and she had become a bitter old woman whose one purpose in life, it seemed, was to hate — to hate and to forget. And it was so easy—or was it?—to forget in Montparnasse.

It is proverbial that the revolution must claim its victims, and these may be psychic as well as physical ones. Commonly seated beside Emma in the cafe was a younger woman who must have been very beautiful ten years earlier, and whose face, despite the inroads that Montparnasse had made upon it, would have been remarked in any company. The eyes, particularly, those eyes that had witnessed the "ten days that shook the world." As John Reed's wife, Louise Bryant had been not only a spectator hut, for America, one of the chief chroniclers of the Russian Revolution, and along with her husband had become a heroic figure and something of a legend for our Leftward-looking intelligentsia. After Reed's death, she had married William Bullitt, who later was to be American ambassador to France. This marriage was not a happy one, and they were separated, after a daughter had been born. At the time I knew Louise she was drifting from cafe to cafe and was famous now for the daring studio parties that she gave in the early hours of the morning. She no longer seemed to care; yet, in contrast to Emma, she was invariably warm, friendly, altogether likable; and never once did she speak of the past, nor would anyone have thought of questioning her about it

Yet another who revived for me a golden age of intellectual exploration and discovery, when for the defiant undergraduate every heretical volume is a likely promised land, was Alexander Berkmann, who would occasionally come up from Nice to visit Emma, his old associate in the anarchist

movement. Sickly and starving in his last days, eking out a bare livelihood (when he succeeded in doing that) by means of translating chores, he was like a wraith out of a distant past. I have seen a number of individuals who were strikingly out of place in the vicinity of the Dome, but none more than this gentle, kindly man who, on a day years before, had emptied his revolver into the body of the Pittsburgh steel magnate, Henry C. Frick, and who afterward had spent some fourteen years in prison. His Prison Memoirs of an Anarchist had been one of the books of my youth. I studied him now. Had he too lost hold of his life philosophy? There was a fire that glowed still in his eyes, but he was tired, very tired.

While some were endeavoring to forget, live down, their past, there was at least one member of the Anglo-American Left Bank colony who paid the penalty for being some decades ahead of her time. Few persons have been more misunderstood than Nancy Cunard. She has set forth her own case in an article which she wrote for the final (No. 5) issue of the New Review. Entitled "Black Man and White Ladyship," the article in question was a violent attack upon Miss Cunard's mother. Lady Cunard, and upon British upper-class society in general (with a side-swipe at George Moore) for its color prejudices. For Miss Cunard was defiant enough of conventions to have a black man for a friend. This created a scandal in London, a scandal which later was echoed by the columnists and sensational press of New York; but anyone who will read her statement will not fail to perceive that it was more than a personal matter with her, that she was fighting for a principle. She was making in real life, and in the callous 'twenties, the same challenge which Lillian Smith's Strange Fruit was to make in later years.

Nancy Cunard was essentially an honest rebel against her class and what she took to be its narrow outlook; she had made a thorough study of Negro art, culture, and anthropology. A visit to her Paris studio, a talk with her there or at the cafe Flore, and one went away convinced of her sincerity.

But whatever the allowances to be made in individual cases, there is no denying that the scene as a whole presented an aspect that was fascinating to the psychiatrist—I sat with one of them at the Dôme and watched his reactions. Things finally came to such a pass that Edouard Roditi, at that time a contributor to Mr. Jolas's transition, now a well-known American scholar, announced with tongue in cheek his intention of founding a magazine whose contributors should be limited to "dipsomaniacs, dope fiends, schizophrenics, and Hindu mystics."

Illustrative of this, perhaps the most striking phase of Latin Quarter life in the entre-deux-guerres period, an incident comes to mind which nearly cost Ezra Pound his life.

Ezra was then associate editor of my magazine, and upon one of his visits to Paris those connected with the New Review decided to give a dinner in his honor at what was ordinarily a most sedate little restaurant in the place de l'Odeon, in the very shadow of Joyce, Stein, and Sylvia Beach's famous bookshop. Among others attending was Ford Madox Ford. Jean Cocteau was supposed to be there but at the last minute telegraphed me that he could not come. This was fortunate; for we did not know when we invited him that we

were to have one of his bitter enemies, an under-cover Surrealist, in our midst. Things went along smoothly enough for a while; indeed, it seemed that the evening was going to be a huge success—until the Surrealist, who, it turned out later, was under the influence of drugs, suddenly whipped out a long, wicked-looking knife from somewhere under his clothes and, turning around, made as if to plunge it into the back of Pound, who was seated immediately behind him

Those of us who saw it were horrified and, for the moment, petrified as well. Luckily, Bob McAlmon, who was sitting next to Pound, had a little more self-possession. Seizing the assailant's arm, he tussled with him until someone from the rear came down with a well-aimed seltzer bottle, and that ended the fray. The dinner broke up in great confusion, with a frantic proprietor urging us to hurry and leave before the gendarmes arrived. As a result, Ford's speech in Pound's honor and Ezra's reply were never made. The American papers in Paris printed nothing about the affair, regarding it, for some reason or other, as too hot to handle.

There is another incident which, though it did not turn out to be so exciting as the one just related, has, I believe, a light to throw on the character of the Quarter in those days and the psychology of its inhabitants. It concerns the opening, a few squares from the Dome, of a new streamlined, chromium-plated brothel, a most respectable institution of its sort, conducted under municipal supervision and known to the French by the charming euphemism maison close. We learned of it on the terraces one afternoon and at the same time heard its name—"the Sphinx." We should not have been excited by the

news if it had not been for one unusual feature: it appeared that invitations to the "grande ouverture" were being sent out to practically everyone in the sixth arrondissement, and we were supposed to bring our wives! This was a characteristic Gallic touch, but sufficiently novel to stimulate our jaded interest. Not to mention the free champagne. As a result, the entire Quarter turned out, or so it seemed to one who tried to make his way through the crush that opening night. Madame's invitation list must have been a Who's Who of love among the artists.

I shall not forget that gala occasion. Madame herself, matronly and dressed in black, was a model of propriety, and as I gazed upon her I knew that the Sphinx would be nothing if not respectable. The bar americain had been described to me, by someone who had had a preview, as "ritzy," but as I beheld its shiny all-metal furnishings, I felt that this was hardly the adjective. Up to then, the Coupole bar had represented for most of us the last word in luxury, for the more expensive Right Bank places were beyond our reach, and it was to the Coupole that we would repair when we grew tired of the dingy if historic surroundings of the Dome. But all this modernistic splendor!

"You like it?" Madame inquired, with commendable restraint; for it was plain to be seen that she was bursting with pride. She proceeded to show us, one group after another, all over the house, including the bedrooms upstairs. Here I was not so impressed as with the bar: there was a connotation of Grand Rapids rather than of the new functionalism—although the inevitable bidet was functional enough. "Is it not in good taste?" Madame kept asking us. "I myself," she added, "am a musician; that is why I love the artists. Yes," and

she gave a sigh, “I play the violin. But les affaires, the Messieurs will realize, les affaires are so pressing. And one must live …”

As for Madame’s girls, young, pretty, with a peasant fresh- ness about them, they were rather demure at the start, over- awed by it all. Brought in from parts unknown, they were tremendously impressed by “les artistes”; but they speedily lost their self-consciousness and became almost, if not quite, as uninhibited as the guests, who were about equally divided between men and women. There was also the usual contingent of homosexuals, male and female, including a delegation of extremely effeminate young Surrealists; but the filles of the Quarter were not present unless escorted, for they represented competition and Madame saw to keeping them out. All in all, it was very much as if the cafe du Dôme and the cafe Select had merged and moved to another location. Even the eight Icelandic giants were to be seen standing at the bar and going through their usual routine, as Kiki and Pascin in the center of the floor did their own unrecognizable version of the Charleston. Madame, meanwhile, was radiantly pleased by it all, pleased that her house was being honored by the presence of so many celebrities; but she could not help being a trifle worried about her beautiful new fixtures.

Among the guests were a number of married couples, and they were by far the most interesting to watch. They obviously were finding the event charmingly risque; but one could not help wondering if the staid and eldering pair of the i94o’s would be likely to mention it over their suburban bridge-tables. Probably not. In this respect Steve and Emily Braden, as we may call them here, were typical. They were sitting at a table with two of Madame’s girls,

who were insisting that they all four go upstairs together; and both Emily and Steve were getting the thrill of their lives. The Bradens were known to everybody, and everybody liked them. He was on what might be termed sabbatical leave from the knit-goods business in Racine (or was it Kenosha?), Wisconsin. Like Harold Stearns and the other Young Intellectuals, they had become disgusted with a money-grubbing America — after having, fortunately, grubbed enough to be able to escape in comfort—and had migrated to the Left Bank to bask in the aura of Joyce and Stein, to entertain the up-and-coming young Surrealists, and to discuss Freud and psychoanalysis at the Dome. They were not wealthy, but compared with most of us they were plutocrats. We had more or less ceased to be conscious of the fact, however, and had come to accept them for what they were, but they seemed unable to forget it; it appeared to be on their minds, and tonight they were trying hard to throw it off, for they had been very much hurt recently by a certain young novelist's portrait of them in his latest books.

Upon looking around the room, I had the feeling that most of the others, likewise, were doing their best to forget, or not to remember. The scene, certainly, was not one of wild abandon. As a matter of fact, to one who was familiar with the other rendezvous of the Quarter and who had not had too much of Madame's very good champagne, it presented much the same aspect as did the Dôme on a bleary morning when one entered it, sober and out of sorts, for a cup of coffee. Why, then, go to the trouble of moving over here? But after all, I suppose, a migration of two or three squares was a great event in our sedentary lives. The young women of the establishment, so far as could be observed, were as pure as when we came. They were merely an excuse. An

excuse to meet the same faces once again and repeat the all too familiar gestures, conversations, and witticisms. If this was “La Boheme,” it was assuredly not as the good burgher imagines it.

It was, perhaps, not strange that Ilya Ehrenburg from his daily chair in the cafe du Dôme should have been led to predict, as he was fond of doing in that era, the downfall, the death, of Western civilization. With his powerfully set, stooping shoulders that gave him almost the appearance of a hunchback, he was one of the human landmarks of the carrefour Vavin. He did not associate much with the Americans, and I do not believe that any of us came to know him well. He was occasionally to be seen at a table with Louis Aragon and some of the other young Frenchmen, but most often he sat alone. He would raise his eyes from time to time above the edge of his French or Russian newspaper, to let them roam over the blaring room as he observed the antics of a group of rowdy “artists,” in all probability Americans; the next moment he would drop his gaze as if abashed at what he had seen.

Had anyone asked him what he took to be the meaning of it all, he would have given much the same answer as Herr Spengler. This was the answer that he did give in an extremely interesting book of essays which he published in the mid- ’thirties, under a title that might be translated as “Slow Curtain” (literally, “Long-Drawn-Out Denouement”). To him, the curtain was surely falling on the culture of the Occident. In support of this view, he would point to the Surrealists, their foolish pranks, their meaningless (as he saw it) “enquêtes,” the perversions that they paraded with so infantile a delight. He would speak of the “rout” that had recently been given by Monsieur and

Madame Andre Maurois at the Ritz, with, in place of guessing games, Jean Cocteau providing the amusement by baptizing in due sacerdotal form his newborn godchild. He would cite as a further instance of decay the mondain Paul Morand, gliding through life on a cushioned diplomat's passport and depicting the eternal feminine in the same eternal bourgeois setting, whether London or Siam—Morand, who wanted his hide when he was dead made into a traveling bag. Or it might be the new dog restaurant that had just been opened in Paris, where they served a ten-franc meal for canines while artists and workers starved. Or that dinner of epicures, not long ago, when they feasted upon a lioness from the zoo ...

Yes, Ehrenburg had an answer, "those Russians" had an answer, which for them was the answer. Coming out of the East, they told us, even in the cafe du Dome, that our Western world was not merely sick but dying, and they proved it to us with case histories; after which they bade us look around, there in Montparnasse, at the supposed representatives of that culture whose doom they were foretelling. Yet Ehrenburg continued to live in the Latin Quarter, on the Left Bank and not on the Right, and he still came to the Dôme every day and sat there a good part of the day. It is hard for the writer, the artist, to break with his own—or the nearest imitation of it that he can find.

Across the street in the Rotonde, meanwhile, sat Russians of a different sort, "white" Russians, who felt that the Revolution had robbed them and who hated everything for which Ehrenburg.

The “new” Russians were not the only ones who had an answer. There were those who told us that the danger was from the East: the Occident threatened by the Orient. Chief among these were Massimo Bontempelli and his Novecentisti, or Twentieth-Century Group. Bontempelli, with the sculptured head of a Caesar, would stand on the corner by the Rotonde and watch Ehrenburg’s stooping figure cross the carrefour Vavin. This did not mean to me then what it does today as I look back upon it, in view of all that has happened since, the course that world history has taken. We profess for the Orient an inborn and cherished contempt. I hate the belly-dance and the, whole body of Asiatic revelation. The words were Bontempelli’s, but the voice was that of Mussolini. The words were big and bold; yet "I giovani” as they were fond of calling themselves, were anything but bold. Speak to them of politics—it was best not to do so, and, above all, D. Duce’s name should not be mentioned—and they would “talk with their eyes.” I used to sit in at their gatherings in the little cafe de la Consigne, opposite the gare du Montparnasse, where they frequently joined forces with the Spanish playboy Ramon Gomez de la Serna and his followers, when Ramon chanced to be in Paris. One would never have known from the conversation there, brilliant as it was upon occasion, that such a thing as politics or a social order existed.

Lack of any concern with society was a trait that was common to most of us; yet all the while, had we but been aware of it, the larger world was closing in upon us. In that home of purgatorial souls, the Rotonde, we encountered more than one exile of a different kind, who had fled his country not for any aesthetic reasons, but simply because he refused to live under a regime of tyranny. We saw and spoke to Miguel de Unamuno, Primo de Rivera’s victim,

as he sat there with his own Unamunoesque variety of inferno, penning that passionate, unclassifiable bit of prose which he entitled "How to Write a Novel," the "novel" being the cry of his own tortured spirit. This was a piece which I later translated and which I published in The New Review and in The European Caravan. Unamuno's was truly a "historic anguish":

> *To live in history and to live history, to shape myself in history, in my Spain, and to shape my history, my Spain, and, along with it, my universe and my eternity—such has been and is ever my one tragic concern in this my exile. History is a legend, that we know; and this legend, this history, is devouring me, and when it is through, I shall be through …*

All this within a literal stone's throw of the Dome. The Greek professor from Salamanca, who with his gray Vandyke, his black crush hat, and his spectacles looked exactly like a Greek professor, might have taught us much. As it was, his conversation was confined to a few fellow countrymen, exiles like himself.

The carrefour Vavin neighborhood did not, of course, constitute the entire Latin Quarter, though this was a fact which we who lived and congregated there tended to overlook. When one went over to the rue de l'Odeon, for example, it was like stepping into another world. Here, at any time of the day or night, a sacrosanct stillness seemed to prevail, which, I sometimes fancied, must emanate from that shrine of literary pilgrims, Sylvia Beach's bookshop, commercially known as Shakespeare & Company. For these were the haunts of Joyce and Stein, both of whom lived not far away and neither of whom was

ever seen near the D6me. The author of Ulysses was well fended against intrusion, but there was always the chance of the true worshiper's being admitted to the presence, while the others, browsing and buying at Miss Beach's, would revel in the thrill of propinquity.

This was the quarter frequented by Eugene Jolas, Elliot Paul, and the transition group, and by certain young Irish- men, friends and admirers of Joyce: Thomas McGreevy, Samuel Beckett, George Reavey, and others, the Dublin intellectuals being in the habit of gathering at the Ecole Normale, where McGreevy and Beckett were instructors. Beckett and Reavey were often seen on the boulevard du Montparnasse, Jolas and his American associates very seldom, for they were workers rather than cafe-sitters. One might or might not agree with the "Revolution of the Word" as set forth in the pages of transition, but one hardly could challenge the seriousness of its propounders.

Across the street from Miss Beach's was the French bookshop of Mile. Adrienne Monnier, La Maison des Amis des Livres, and from there to the offices of La Nouvelle Revue Franfaise in the rue de Beaune was but a step. For the place de l'Odeon was a time-honored center of intellectual life: Mademoiselle Monnier was regarded by many as being the strong woman of contemporary Gallic letters, and her place, at once a bookshop and a salon, was the rendezvous of many famous writers, the starting point of more than one modern movement, and, in general, the home of avant-garde literature, which found an expression in the review known as Le Navire d'Argent. Here again, despite the note of modernity, the atmosphere was one of intense earnestness and accomplishment.

Leaving the rue de l'Odeon for the boulevard Saint-Germain and walking toward the place Saint-Germain-des-Pres, one came upon still another quarter, that of the Deux-Magots, with the little cafe Flore close by, where the "seceding" Surrealists—Ribemont-Dessaignes, Robert Desnos, Georges Hugnet, Monny de Boully, and others—held forth. The cafe des Deux-Magots itself was something like neutral ground, a vague No Man's Land between opposing camps and between the Right Bank and the Left, being a favorite resort of journalists and of Sorbonne professors invading another Bohemia than the one to which they were accustomed in the vicinity of the Boul' Mich'. It was to the Deux-Magots that one took a new acquaintance when uncertain as to just how to place him. The atmosphere as a rule was a tranquil one, a relief to Montparnassians who wanted to get away from it all. Of an afternoon one might find Hemingway there, or Ezra Pound if he happened to be in Paris; and of an evening. Ford Madox Ford would likely be seated at one of the tables, surrounded by a carefully chosen audience of two or three.

Crossing the place Saint-Germain-des-Pres and going down the rue Bonaparte, past the shops of the antiquaries and the old-book dealers, to the embankments of the Seine, one at once became conscious of the atmosphere of the Beaux-Arts and the Institut, of the Academy and academicians—an aroma of the past. Along the river were the stalls of the bouqinistes, known to every tourist, where four centuries of French literature lay slumbering in dusty bins. Moliere, Montaigne, La Rochefoucauld, Racine—how many volumes had found their way from there to the shelves of my library! I remember how elated I was the day I came upon a book published during Rabelais's lifetime,

about the period when he was writing his Pantagruel. This was not a dead past; it was one that lived and breathed. I thought of Proust, Gide, Valery; they appeared to me to have a connection with these stalls; they represented a prolongation of that past. And then I would recall our latest hyper-aesthetic cafe argument and it would seem, somehow, very futile.

Following the river in the general direction of Notre Dame until one came out in the place Saint-Michel, one found himself in the Quarter of the Schools, a quarter which for some seven centuries had been riotous with intellectual life. I do not believe I ever went down the Boul' Mich' without thinking of that vagabond, thief, cut-throat, pimp, and poet, Francois Villon, who once swaggered along this same thoroughfare. The students of today were as brawling a lot as any Villon knew. It was political questions that stirred them now, and there were Rightist or Leftist demonstrations nearly every week, with the Action Francaise monarchists as the chief inciters. These young men and women were a good deal more aware of what was going on than We of the boulevard du Montparnasse; that looming battle which we but dimly sensed was here taking tangible form. And all the while, M. Bergson's lecture room at the Sorbonne was crowded with society ladies whose limousines stood waiting for them; even they were aware of something that was in the air in those days.

A good place from which to view the life of the student quarter was the cafe de la Gare in the place Saint-Michel, especially of a morning when the polyglot throng came trooping in for a coffee and crescent before going to classes. As the square outside rapidly filled with buses, trams, and human

beings, and the chestnut-vendor and the old woman selling papers cried their wares, one might listen to an animated argument at a near-by table on any subject from the higher calculus to what happened yesterday in the Chamber of Deputies. With it all went the inevitable buoyancy and unaffected lightheartedness of youth—how old we of the carrefour Vavin seemed by contrast! Or one might drop in of an evening at the cafe Cluny, a short distance down the boulevard. This was the favorite haunt of Sorbonne professors in their hours of recreation. I preserve a delightful memory of two aging members of the Society of Rabelaisian Studies who one night spent several hours debating, over a bottle of Vichy water, the true significance of Pantagruel's mighty thirst. But one could also hear discussions of Freud, Bergson, Husserl, Levy-Bruhl, Kierkegaard …all without the stimulation of fine or pernod or the titillation of sex.

All of us discovered from time to time this real and original Latin Quarter of which our own was but an offshoot and, to a large extent, an imitation. We would come upon it in the course of an afternoon's stroll—walking off a hangover, it might be, from the night before—and then we would return once more to our accustomed places at the D6me, the Coupole, or the Select, to resume our discussions of art and America and the artist soul and to revel in the "freedom" we had so bravely achieved.

{*Chapter Three: Paris Was Our Mistress*}

## *Tribute to Blaise Cendrars by Henry Miller*

*Je suis un homme inquiet, dur vis à vis de soi-même, comme tous les solitaires.*
From Une Nuit dans la Forêt.

The reason I always think of Cendrars with affection and admiration is that he resembles so closely that Chinese rock-bottom man of my imagination whom I have probably invented because of my hatred and contempt for the men I see about me in the world today. Cendrars himself gives the clue to his enigmatic character in an autobiographical fragment, a little book called Une Nuit dans la Forêt. "*De plus en plus, je me rends compte que j'ai toujours pratiqué la vie contemplative*."

Turbulent and chaotic though his writing seems, the meaning nevertheless is always crystal clear. Cendrars anchors himself in the very heart of things. He is the most active of men and yet serene as a lama. To bemoan the contradictoriness of his nature is to misjudge him. The man is all of a piece, one inexhaustible creative substance which enjoys a continuous fulfillment through giving. Many people would say that he is generous to a fault. I would not use the word generous in connection with Cendrars. He is beyond that. He is a vital force, a blind and pitiless urge, closer to nature than to man. He is tender and ruthless at the same time. He is antinomian. And always uniquely himself, always uniquely Blaise Cendrars.

If you will look at a list of his works you will see that more than half of them are exhausted. And if you study the titles of his works you will see that the

man himself is inexhaustible. He is the most contemporary of contemporaries, dated and undated at the same time. He is so well informed that he is absolutely oblivious of what is going on. Cendrars is the crude ore of which the finest metals are made. He can tell the most monstrous lies and remain absolutely truthful. In every yarn he spins there is more of vital substance and genuine fact than you can find in the whole panorama, for example, of Jules Romains' magnum opus. In every book he gives us Cendrars seems to be making the gesture of bending down and picking up a handful of earth with his good left hand. In every book he seems to be embracing us with that mutilated arm through which the blood still courses warm and red. Cendrars knows only the reality and honesty of the heart. His gestures, often rough and awkward, are nevertheless manly gestures. He never tries to please or to conciliate. He is the worst diplomat in the world, and consequently the best. He is not a realist, but real. In his peculiar inhuman way he does only what is human, responds only to what is human. If sometimes he seems like a charge of dynamite it is because his sincerity, his integrity, is incorruptible.

Cendrars is a voyager. There is hardly a corner of the globe whereon he has not set foot. He has not only voyaged about the world, but beyond the world. He has been to the moon, to Man, to Neptune, Vega, Saturn, Pluto, Uranus. He is a visionary who does not spurn the ordinary means of travel, of locomotion. Usually he travels incognito, adopting the manners and the speech of the people he is visiting. He carries no passport and no letters of credit, neither letters of introduction, to be sure. He knows that wherever he lands it is the same rigmarole. It is not a question of confidence in himself, nor even of faith in his lucky star—it is a question of accuracy. When he

describes his celestial voyages he proceeds simply and honestly, as if he were describing a trip to Formosa or Patagonia. The world is one, the same in dream as in waking life. One plasma and one magma. Frontiers exist only for the timid ones, for the poor and mean at heart. Cendrars never uses the word "frontier": he speaks of latitude and longitude. He inquires about the climate, or the nature of the soil, what do you use for food, and so on. He is almost frighteningly natural, almost inhumanly human. "*L'action seule libère. Elle dénoue tout.*"

He has friends everywhere, even among the Hottentots. And yet he is the most solitary of men. Of all the men I have ever met he is the most liberated—yet thoroughly earthbound. To use the word "cosmic" with reference to him would be to insult him; it would imply that he accepted life. Cendrars does not accept. He accepts nothing. He says neither "Yes" nor "No." He walks over such questions rough-shod. He becomes terrifyingly silent. And that is why perhaps he is the most marvellous talker I have ever listened to. His talk is not of loneliness, as with most men—it is of the absolute moment, of nothingness, of evanescence and metamorphosis. And so it is fecund, magical, toxic. His talk is pure destruction to everything that is not of the moment; it is a mirage born of the peculiar spiritual atmosphere which he has created about him and in which he lives. He follows it thirstily, like the wanderer in the desert. But he is never lost, nor is he ever deceived. Nor does he ever leave his body, as do those strange seekers of wisdom in Tibet. Wherever Cendrars goes his body accompanies him— and his hunger and his thirst. If it has been a tight squeeze he returns looking emaciated; if it was plain sailing he comes back with ruddy face and that sort of starry gleam in his eyes which is

unforgettable. One is tempted to say of him that he is hallucinating. Cendrars not only creates longing, he answers it too. His talk is that of a man ceaselessly emptying his pockets. He does not talk words; he talks things, facts, deeds, experiences. He needs no adjectives, just verbs and nouns—and conjunctions and conjunctions and conjunctions.

His nationality is obscure. He is a melting-pot of all races, all peoples. Once I was going to dedicate a book to him—"To Blaise Cendrars, the first Frenchman to make me a royal gesture!"—but I realized as I wrote the phrase that it would be an injustice to Cendrars to call him a Frenchman. No, he is, as I said before, the Chinese rock-bottom man of my imagination, the man that D. H. Lawrence would like to have been, the man of the cosmos who remains forever unidentified, the man who renews the race by putting humanity back into the crucible. "*Je méprise tout ce qui est. J'agis. Je revolutionne*," says Cendrars.

I remember reading *Moravagine*, one of my very first attempts to read French. It was like reading a phosphorescent text through smoked glasses. I had to divine what he was saying, Cendrars, but I got it. If he had written it in Tegalic I would have gotten it. Even in such a work as L'Eubage one gets it, gets it quick in the guts—or never. Everything is written in blood, but a blood that is saturated with starlight. Cendrars is like a transparent fish swimming in a planetary sperm; you can see his backbone, his lungs, his heart, his kidneys, his intestines; you can see the red corpuscles moving in the blood-stream. You can look clean through him and see the planets wheeling. The silence he

creates is deafening. It takes you back to the beginning of the world, to that hush which is engraved on the face of mystery.

I always see him there in the hub of the universe, slowly revolving with the vortex. I see his slouch hat and battered mug beneath it. I see him "revolutionizing," because there is no help for it, because there is nothing else to do. Yes he is a sort of Brahman à rebours, as he says of himself, a Brahman who is the envoy plenipotentiary of the active principle itself. He is the man of the dream which he is dreaming, and he will be that until the dream ends. There is no subject and object. There is. A transitive mode which is expressed by the intransitive; action which is the negation of activity. Cendrars is the eye of the navel, the face in the mirror which remains after you have turned your back on it.

Another interesting thing about him—he does as little as possible. It is not that he is lazy—far from it!—nor that he is gripped by the futility of things. It is rather because he is a piece of human radium buried in the maggot pile of humanity. At the very bottom of the pile he can still assert his full strength. He does not need to get up and walk or shout; he has only to be, only to radiate his inexhaustible vitality. He is the incarnation of the very opposite principle which governs the world, like the lie which reveals the truth. He is all those things which we know only by contrast, and so he has not even to move his little finger. The slightest voluntary movement and he would be done for, he would explode. And Cendrars knows it. He has an almost geologic wisdom, which is why he is never logical, never ruthful, never serious, never hopeful, never confident, never trustful, never anything. He is never, never, never. He

is. You reach to him by leaning backward, by receding, by putting minus in front of you. You can never meet him face to face, never seize him by putting your arms out. You must relinquish, sink back, close your eyes. He is at the beginning of the road, not at the end. Meet me yesterday, he says, or the day before yesterday. It is no use setting the alarm—you will never get up early enough to meet him.

If he had wanted to be anything he could have been it most successfully. He does not want He is like the sage in the Chinese story who, when asked why he never performed the miracles attributed to his disciple, replied; "The Master is able to do these things, but he is also able to refrain from doing them." His disinterestedness is always a positive, active quality. He is not inactive—*he refuses, he rejects*.

It is this instinctive, ordained defiance in Cendrars which makes the word "rebel" sound ridiculous when applied to him. He is not a rebel, he is an absolute traitor to the race, and as such I salute him. The salute is wasted, of course, because Cendrars doesn't give a damn whether you salute him or not. Would you salute a tree for spreading its foliage? Whether you are at the bottom or the top is all the same to Cendrars. He doesn't care to know what you are trying to do; he is only interested in what you are. He looks you through and through, pitilessly. If you are meat for the gristle, fine! he devours you. If you are just suet, then down the sewer you go—unless that day he happens to be in need of a little fat. He is the epitome of injustice, which is why he appears so magnanimous. He does not forgive, or pardon, or condemn, or condone. He puts you in the scales and weighs you. He says nothing. He

lets you do the talking. With himself he is equally rigorous. "*Moi, l'homme le plus libre du monde, je reconnais que l'on est toujours lié par quelque chose, et que la liberté, l'indépendance n'existe pas, et je me méprise autant que je peux, tout en rejouissant de mon impuissance.*"

He has been accused of writing trash. It is true that he does not always write on the same level— but Cendrars never writes trash. He is incapable of writing trash. His problem is not whether to write well or badly, but whether to write or not write. Writing is almost a violation of his way of living. He writes against the grain, more and more so as the years go on. If, on the impulse of the moment, or through dire necessity, he takes the notion to do a piece of reportage, he goes through with it with good grace. He goes about even the most trivial task with pains, because fundamentally he does not recognize that one thing is trivial and another important. If it is not anti-human, his attitude, it is certainly anti-moral. He is as much ashamed of being disgusted or revolted as of being exalted or inspired. He has known what it is to struggle, but he despises struggle too.

His writing, like his life, is on different levels. It changes color, substance, tempo, just as his life changes rhythm and equilibrium. He goes through metamorphoses, without however surrendering his identity. His behavior seems to be governed not merely by internal changes—psychic, chemical, physiologic—but by external ones also, chiefly by interstellar configurations. He is tremendously susceptible to changes of weather—the spiritual weather. He experiences in his soul genuine eclipses; he knows what it means to fly off at a tangent, or to sweep across the sky like a flaming comet. He has been put

on the rack, drawn and quartered; he has pursued his own shadow, tasted madness. It seems to me that his greatest tribulation has been to accept the quality of the grandiose which is written in his destiny. His struggle has been with his own fate, with the grandeur which for some reason he has never wholly accepted. Out of desperation and humility he has created for himself the more human role of the antagonist. But his destiny was laid down in royal colors. He does not fit in anywhere because his whole life has been lived in defiance of the pattern which was ordained. And desperate and tragic, even foolish as such a course may seem, it is the very inmost virtue of Cendrars, the link which binds him to the human family, which makes him the wonderful copain he is, the marvellous man among men whom even the unseeing recognize immediately. It is this challenge which he carries around in him, which he hurls now and then in his mad, drunken moments; it is this which really sustains those about him, those who have had even the least contact with him. It is not the blustering, heroic attitude, but the blind, tragic defiance of the Greeks. It is the resistance to fate which is always aroused by a super-endowment of strength, by a super-wisdom. It is the Dionysian element which is created at the moment of greatest lucidity: the frail, human voice denying the god-impulse because to accept it would mean the death of all that is creative, all that is truly human. It is on this wheel of creation and destruction that Cendrars turns, as the globe itself turns. It is this which isolates him, makes him a solitary. He refuses to spread himself thin over an illusory pattern of grandeur; he muscles deeper and deeper into the hub, into the everlasting no-principle of the universe.

***Pictorial:  Candid Camera***

## *Oh how I wanted a Zizi by Rose Lang*

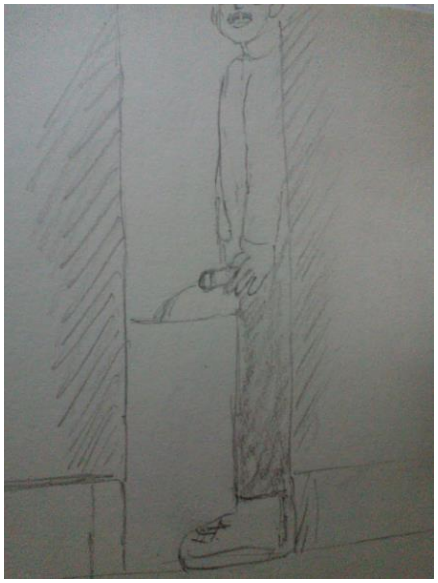
{translated from French}

[**Paris**] We all have our secret desires. You probably won't admit you have secret desires and even if you admit to having them, you will probably never share them with anyone except perhaps your lover in the fits of intimacy. He probably has his secret desires too. Promise me you will not mock his, if of course he does not mock yours. I admit to having many secret desires. Some of my countless secret desires are rather strange and perhaps even perverse.

Since I was a little girl I have had one secret desire that I will share with you. Being a girl I know all about my body and in particular my sex. Can you guess what this secret desire is? It is how much I wish I could have a *Zizi* all my own, not permanently mind you because I like being a girl and having a clitoris. In case you can't figure what a *Zizi* is, it is French slang for a boys '*you know what*.'

I was five when I saw my first *Zizi*. It was summer time and I was visiting ma *grandmere*. We were out on the streets of Paris. A man was in a *pissoir* and out of the corner of my eye I noticed his *Zizi*. I knew boys could pee standing up so it was no surprise to see the pee arch through the air and into the receptacle. What surprised me was what his *Zizi* looked like. The man was a workman. He was short and stocky and his *Zizi* was short and quite thick.

When he turned away from the receptacle he saw that I was watching him. He was not embarrassed but instead was not in a rush to tuck himself back into his trousers and zip up. To tease me he giggled his *Zizi* back and forth. Or maybe it was to rid himself of the last drops of his pee? Whatever the reason he took pleasure in it. I later drew a picture of him peeing.



He could have turned his back when he peed in the *pissoir*, most men do, but I think he wanted me watch him. It would amaze me how much boys are exhibitionists. I would discover this to be one of the big distinctions between girls and boys. Most boys are proud of their *Zizis*, unless they are tiny. Girls like to hide their mystique away. Later I would also find out that every boy is different, just as every girl is also unique.

I stood there with my mouth wide open so he knew this was a first for me. He smiled, tucked himself back into his trousers, zipped up, grabbed his crotch and gave it a big pull. Suddenly I felt a hand on my shoulder, '*ca va petite*?'

It was my *grandmere*. We were out shopping for groceries. I turned to look up at her and when I turned back the workman was gone.

For the next half hour I was very quiet, trying to understand what I had just saw. My *grandmere* asked me if I was feeling all right. I couldn't really tell her what had happened or how I was feeling so I just told her I was tired and had a headache. She took me straight back to her apartment, poured me a bath and then I spent the rest of the afternoon in bed.

That afternoon while in bed with my hands I explored my sex and tried to imagine what a *Zizi* would feel like. I drifted asleep and had a most remarkable dream that I had grown a *Zizi*.

For as long as I can remember I have dreamed. Sometime I would have nightmares but most of the time as I slept I had wonderful dreams. Even today, now that I am much older, I dream and sometimes I even remember dreams I have had many years before. I feel sorry for people who do not or cannot dream. To be able to dream is to live a second life, separate from our waking hours. When we dream we can explore the surreal and do things we couldn't do in real life – like a girl growing a *Zizi*.

When I woke that afternoon my sex was very pink and sensitive to touch. In my dream I had figured out that a boy's *Zizi* was where *mon petit bouton*, *mon clitoris est.* If you want something to wonder about, *clitoris* in French is masculine word *le clitoris*. But why? It should be *la clitorise* n'est ce pas? Boys don't have *un clitoris*, girls do. Boys have *Zizis* …

With took my girlish fingers I carefully pulled back *le capuchin autour mon clitoris*. *Mon petit bouton* was no bigger than the tip of my little finger. I wondered why *le Zizi etait si grand, mais mon clitoris etait si petit*. I decided then and there that I needed to find out.

I got up and decided not to dress and went downstairs to the garden door, opened it and stood at the threshold, peering out deep in my thoughts. There was a boy about my age that lived next door. We had grown up together. I was hoping he would see me.

In the past he had asked to see what I looked like. Today I wanted him to see me so that I could ask to see his *Zizi*. After a minute or so his face appeared in a second floor window. He stood there in amazement staring at me. I

waved at him and he waved at me. Then he opened the window and called out "do you want to play?" Oui …"

Just then my grandmere saw me and grabbed her Polaroid camera and took a picture of me *sans habillement*. I still have the picture. She asked me what I was thinking about, so I told her! But I didn't tell her about what I wanted to do with the boy next door.

"Let's go upstairs and get dress then I will make you a sandwich, you must be hungry, she said. Indeed I was but I was hungry *pour les saucisses*, French for sausages! It is funny how many French slang words there are for the Zizi! There are even more for the softness of a woman.

Ma grandmere was very wise and so I trusted her to help me understand the whole *Zizi* thing. I asked what a *Zizi* was. She asked me if I had ever seen a *Zizi*. I said yes, but I didn't tell her about the man in the *pissoir*. I thought this might upset her enough to call the police.

Instead I told her one of the boys in the neighborhood had taken a quick pee behind a tree and I happen to see him do it. I made up that story of course. She asked me to describe the boy. I told her the boy was my age and she left things at that. She suspected it was the boy next door, who she knew to be good at heart and my friend.

"Stay away from older boys," she warned me. "They have only one thing on their minds." "What was that?" I asked her. She said I was too young to

know all about boys and babies but she did tell me enough to scare me from letting older boys put their *Zizis* into me.

I was half way through my sandwich when there was a knock on the kitchen door. It was the boy next door. I offered him half of my sandwich which he gladly ate. Then we made our dash to the kitchen door, but my grandmother would not let me go out to play since "I was just getting over a headache …" she said, so we had to stay inside out of the summer sun. She made us some sweet lemonade and we were escorted into the drawing room.

Ma *grandmere* had a wonderful library so we took two travel picture books down and laying on the delicious coolness of the marble floor we started to enjoy the books. He had chosen a travel book from Africa which had many bare breasted girls. He kept on showing me the pictures and making edgy comments.

I found a picture in my book of a baby boy being held on his mother's hip with his Zizi showing and turned to him and asked if his was bigger than the one in the picture. "Wouldn't you like to see!" was his answer to me so I just nodded.

From time to time ma grandmere would check in to see "if everything was fine …" probably because she knew I had *Zizis* on my mind. It was about twenty minutes before he whispered "*wow … tu etait nus*!"

"You saw what I look like, now I want to see what you look like," I said. He rolled over and tugged down his pants. He was not wearing underwear. That was the first time I saw a *Zizi* so close. It was smaller than the man's but that shouldn't have surprised me. I did not know this but underneath a *Zizi* is a boy's marble sack. That afternoon was also the first time I touched a *Zizi*. It was so soft! I also played with his marbles. Oh how I wanted a *Zizi* of my own!

Then there was the sound of approaching footsteps. Everything was as it should be by the time *ma grandmere* checked in to see "if everything was fine …" Indeed it was!

After *ma grandmere* had left us alone I told him in a whisper about the man in the *pissoir*. "Girls have to sit when you pee. We are proud that we can stand and pee. Boys like to let girls watch when they pee."

A few days later he let me watch him pee. We were outside playing. He went behind a tree, zipped open his trousers and then watered the tree. He made a game of it trying to arch his pee high above.

The next time he let me watch was when we had walked to a hill nearby. I took some pictures of him peeing. I had snuck my grandmere's Polaroid with black and white film in it.

He proudly said he could pee the furthest of all the boys his age in the neighborhood. I asked him how he knew this and he confessed that the boys in the neighborhood had peeing contests. Who could pee the furthest? Who could knock over a target. Who could hit a bee in flight. Boys will be boys!

Later that summer he arranged for me to watch one of their peeing contest. Before I could watch though I had to let the boys watch me pee. So I lifted

my dress, drew down my panties and squatted but in my nervousness of having so many boys watching me I could barely produce a trickle. Nonetheless they let me stay and watch their contest. I couldn't stop giggling!

After they were finished I needed to pee badly so I just squatted a second time and won *la plus grande flaque d'eau* award! They made me an honorary member of their club; the first girl to be invited to their contest.

By the end of that summer I had seen a dozen *Zizis* ... but I only had the courage to touch the *Zizi* of the boy next door.

Oh how I wanted a *Zizi*!

# Novella: The Pig Who Loved Bacon by Patrick

Life on the farm is predominantly about life itself. Things are born or are grown from seed. Livestock and poultry are managed and domesticated. Plants are sown, tended and then harvested. The days are long and the seasons even longer. And the *birds and the bees* … well that takes on a *practicality* that only an experienced farmer can direct.

For a city dweller, some of these *practicalities* are puzzling to say the least. A few of them are enough to keep a growing boy up at night. I was sent to the farm the summer of my twelfth year. It was a ritual that my grandfather used with my father when he was my age, and my father felt I warranted the same treatment. I both dreaded and was thrilled by the thought of being on my aunt and uncle's farm for a month a two hour's drive north of Edmonton where I grew up.

Being the second born in a family of four children and being perhaps the most energetic of the four (an older and arrogant brother and two younger sisters, one half my age) I felt a degree of freedom on the farm that I could not enjoy in the big city in the hot Alberta summer. Every day was a new rural adventure.

I admit I saw many strange things on the farm that summer, like decapitated chickens running around without their head, or a mamma cow giving birth to a calf, and then watching the calf stand up on its wobbly legs five minutes after its first breath. I don't think I ate chicken once that summer on the farm in my enforced state of vegetarianism (naïve me never thought about how and where the chickens we ate came from). Besides, having seen the chicken

coup, I was sure that the chickens were still unclean even after being *dressed for dinner* and roasted. I chased after wild mice in the fields and also went fishing for pike in the creek that ran diagonally across the farm. Catching the fish was fun enough but when I was told I would have to skin and gut the thing I went back to other rural pursuits. Besides the pike were ugly looking beasts and didn't taste that good even with chopped spring onions, parsley and fresh made farm butter.

That summer I even saw a turkey fly through the air thinking it was a duck and wrote about it in my story *The Three Turkeys*. I saw pigs in a panic knowing they were being carted off to be butchered and then smoked into ham or bacon (tell me they don't know what's about to happen – pigs are far smarter than dogs).

I have even watched as young bulls were elasteromized (castrated using tight fitting rubber bands) and made into steers, and watched with trepidation a few days later as their scrotums and testicles turned a dark black and fell to the ground as prairie oysters. At night I imagined I could hear the wolves searching in the fields for these prized remnants, and howling in enjoyment of their finds.

Yes, for a city boy, there are so many strange things to be seen on a farm. One of the strangest things I saw was the pig (a sow) who loved bacon.

She had started out as the one and only girl piglet amongst a litter of twelve boy piglets. The odds to that was about one in 8,000. I was told by my uncle

that she was the last to be born and the smallest piglet in the bunch, and that she was always pushed away from their mother's teat, for there were only twelve teats and well she was so much smaller than her brothers. It seems her mother was too fat to be bothered by her fate and so the farmer ended up having to nurse her in a separate pen, first trying to wean her on another sow that was much too old to produce her own milk. Then he tried cow's milk on her without success.

Finally, the farmer took to separating out the piglets from the sow and giving the little girl piglet the first suckle each morning and each evening, something that took a great deal of effort on the farmer's part for the boy piglets were greedy and hungry and well … were *des vrai couchons*, as the French would say. But my uncle needed to think of the next batch of piglets and the new born sow would have to be the one to provide them. So she was treated like a queen by my uncle who, while being a big and burly type, would somewhat soften when looking after the sow. Nothing was not good enough for her care and comfort, including her own little pen that my uncle built off from the bigger pen.

The summer pen was on the shadow side of the big red barn that was the heart of my uncle's farm. It was also on the downhill side of the small hill upon which the barn stood. Pigs don't like sun and burn easily and hence the placement of the summer pen. In the winter the pig pen on the sunlight side of the barn was used.

I soon discovered that the pigs were rather bright, much brighter than the dogs and other farm yard animals, and that there existed a sort of order to their pig pen – a sort of *Porcus Societatis*. I didn't know what psychology meant at the young age of twelve but in hind sight as I watch the goings on in the pig pen from the barn door in the loft overlooking the summer pen I started to notice patterns in the behavior of the pigs.

Years later I would read George Orwell's book *Animal Farm* and reminisce about some of the antics that the pigs got into that summer … *Whatever goes upon two legs is an enemy … All animals are equal … Some are more equal than others …*

As a result of my uncle's extra special care, the sole female piglet soon began to grow and grow and grow. She knew to wean on each of her mother's teat in turn and draw the best of the fattening milk from her mother's breasts, before it was the chance of her twelve brothers. Pretty soon the girl piglet was telling the farmer the time of day based on her insistent and ravenous snorting, first in the morning near dawn, before the morning milking and in the afternoon, just after the cows had been milked, a second time.

The female piglet soon learned to assert her specialness, for the farmer knew it was to her that he would have to turn for his next batch of piglets. It would be her chance next for her own mother had grown too old, too fat and too tired to mind more than eating, milking and doing the messy things that immobile pigs do twice a day. The farmer could hardly keep her pen clear of her mess … to the point that even the twelve male piglets began to complain.

The female piglet didn't seem to mind for when she suckled she had room to walk daintily about the pen and feast. Besides when she suckled it was with a certain feminine grace that did not chaff or irritate. She continued to suckle even after she was on solid muff and oats.

It wasn't long before the twelve boys were in full rebellion with the special treatment their sister was getting. They became more and more aggressive, one piglet in particular. One day my uncle was bitten by that pig and had had enough with him and while he was sleeping that night tied his legs together, turned him over and well out came the emasculator … His squealing was heard far across the farm yard that night and well into the early dawn. That morning I watched as the pig frantically ran around the pen trying everything he could think of to disentangle and free himself. But to no avail.

In a few days that male pig was aggressive no more, and then got to feed with his sister. With the passage of time each of the boy piglets in turn were weaned off their mother's teat and then emasculated, until there remained only two who were still whole.

Now you would think my uncle would want the survival of the fittest to decide who of the pigs would keep the best of him, but it was inevitable that a sow that is impregnated will produce piglets, which if fed would produce lots of bacon. "As it happens," my uncle said to me one day that, "it was the girl hormones in the pig that made them fat, not the boy hormones." I scratched

my head for at age twelve I knew nothing about hormones, and wondered why boy pigs would have 'girl hormones.'

Sure enough, the castrated pig began to grow to rival the pudginess of their sister, the grand sow. They even took to drooping breasts. Damned if I didn't sense her resentment of this.

When the emasculated pigs grew big enough my uncle said "they were ready to be made into bacon" and he himself took to slaughtering them and quartering them into ham, sausages, and bacon, and yes, he had a smoke house which billowed smoke, which sometimes drifted aimlessly off into the fields beyond, but most times billowed back across the pig pen itself.

One by one, starting with the biggest of the castrated, the pigs were dragged off by their hind legs, kicking and squealing, to the slaughter house. The ritual would begin in the morning when my uncle, before even milking the cows and feeding the pigs, would stock the smokehouse fire with wood he harvested in the woods near the creek. This wood, when it burned, had a distinct smell to it. Or perhaps the smell might have been the drippings left over from the previous batch of bacon.

One morning my uncle even dragged the mamma sow into the slaughterhouse and her offspring lined the pen as she was laboriously manhandled to the slaughterhouse. She knew perhaps what fate awaited her but she was too tired with life to put up much of a fight. The ol' mamma knew that her farrowing days were now past. Her brood was more subdued than normal that day. It

was then that the remaining female pig was eyed by her many brothers and she scurried off to keep her backside to the back of the pen.

The early morning smoke from the smoke house, which was thick and had its own unique odor, brought an ill ease over all the pigs, save the young sow who somehow knew that she would not share the immediate fate as her brothers. My uncle seemed hurried on the mornings when he meant to quarter and then smoke a pig. The milking of the cow and the feeding of the pigs would bring an uneasy pause, then he would enter the pen and a grand battle would begin. I made myself scarce those mornings, for I didn't want to participate in this unpleasant affair.

During these grand battles it would be *every pig for himself*, save the sow and the two intact males. Somehow the two whole boys knew it was fine and they took to standing next to their sister at the back of the pen to watch the chaos. Still having testicles was the *sine qua non* to their exclusion in those grand battles (but like a father praying mantis, their extinction would come too, just a bit later).

When the cuckold ones fought as individuals it was easy for my uncle to trap and drag one away. In the space of a few battles the pigs learned to fight as a pack and try to nip and bite at my uncle's heels as he chased after them. My uncle was forced to bring a broom with him into the pen, and after breaking it in his defense had to take to a hefty kicks or two to push the mob aside. As their numbers diminished the grand battles became rather sinister … (if you know a little Latin then you know what *sin* means …)

I watch this whole unpleasant affair with some fascination from the barn door in the loft overlooking the pen. Then I saw something else begin with the three privileged ones. The female pig began her own *fanfaronade* as the bacon was being made, lifting her snout into the smoky wind in a sort of ecstasy. At the same time a love triangle of sorts began to develop. The sow and one of her incestuous suitors began to socialize, while the third tried his best to pig in. She would flirt with them, present her backside and then rush off as they tried to mount her.

One day, late in the afternoon her flirting proved too much for the two and one of the condemned mounted her when she was trapped and cornered by two of the others. She tried to fight him off to no avail. The commotion caught my attention and I ran to see what was going on. The commotion set off an orgasmic frenzy that made me think of a condemned man's last wish. They simply over powered her and she succumbed to their efforts. It was a real banger. The last two remaining fertile pigs had had their way with her.

Perhaps it was her pheromones that had intoxicated them. Perhaps it was the realization that this would be the one and only time for them. She was left dazed and by herself at the center or the pen. Then for the rest of that day they left her alone. The following morning when my uncle came to take another porker away to his surprise the pigs didn't put up much of a fight.

I sensed the sow knew what was happening and so she took to letting the last condemned one have his pleasure with her. That morning she paraded about

for about an hour then backed into him so that he had no choice but to assuage to her amorous wishes. The pig pen was hers.

Then one day despite the best effort from the one remaining boy she refused to let him mount her. My uncle sensed something was up and got the veterinarian in. "There be piglets on their way," was the news. That very afternoon the last of the boys was … you know.

As the last of her twelve brothers was being led to the slaughter, so began her final *fanfaronade*. She had the whole pen to herself and was growing fat with child ...

By the end of my stay on the farm there was only one pig left in the pen. She was the pig who loved bacon.

***Pictorial: The End …***

## *Magazines by Obelisk Press*

Pen & Pencil Magazine

Poetic Voice Magazine

Art & Eros Magazine

Dada Magazine

L'Espionage

Genius Magazine

Neos et Le Surealisme

## *Affiliated Publishing Houses*

Obelisk Press

Atelier Press

Pythagoras Publishing

Le Minotaur

Over 350 titles to choose from

# Le Minotaur Press